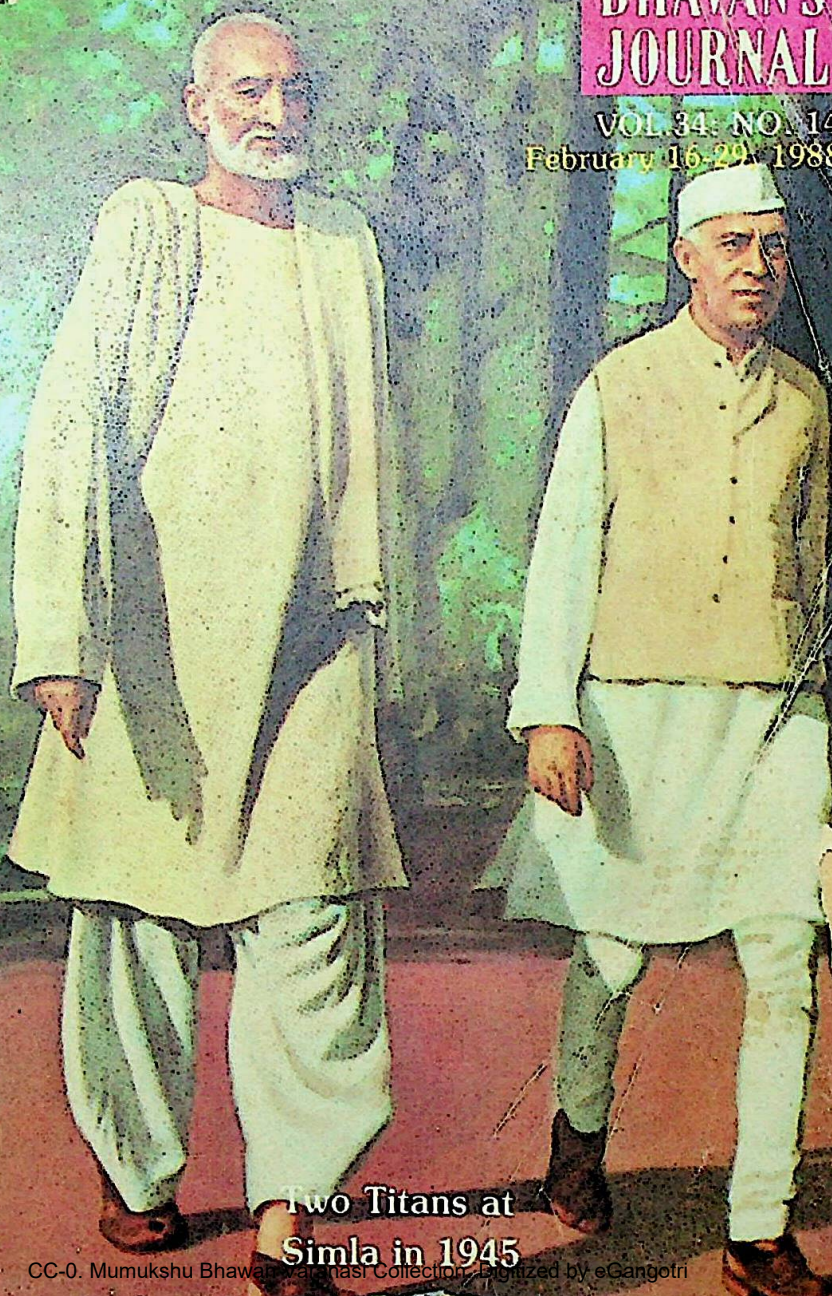


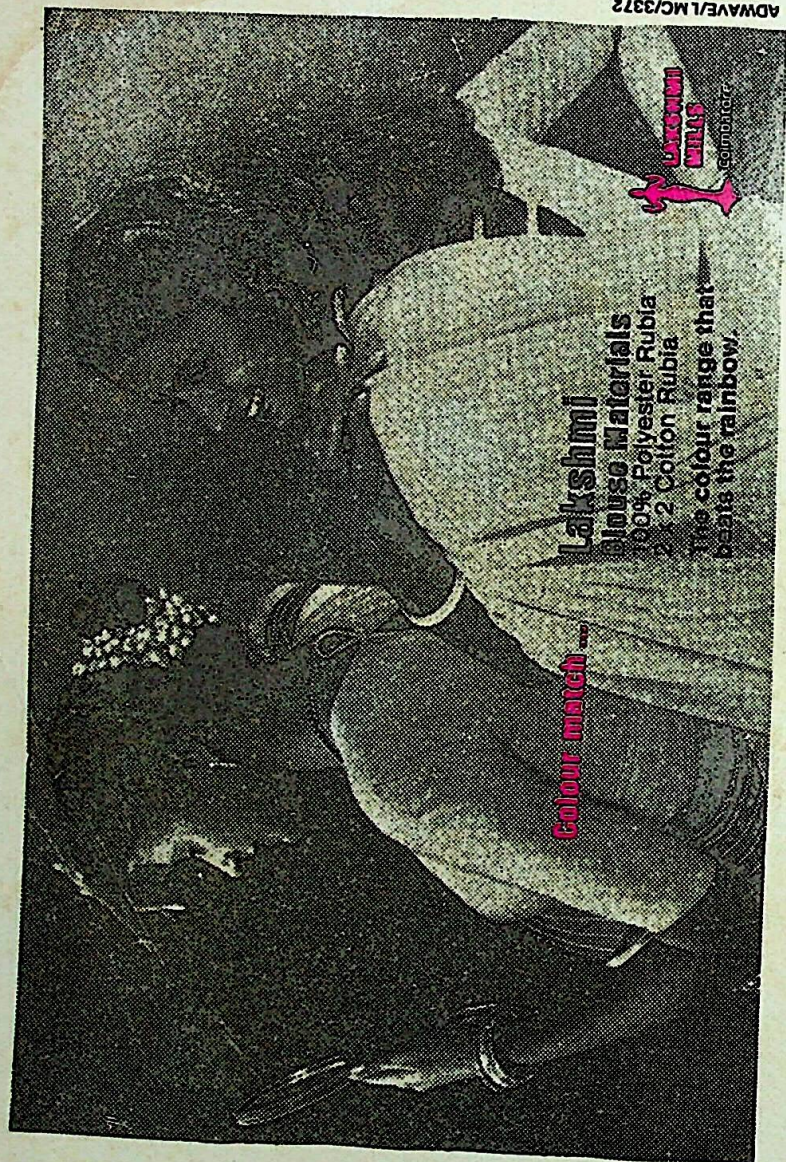
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BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

VOL. 34, NO. 14
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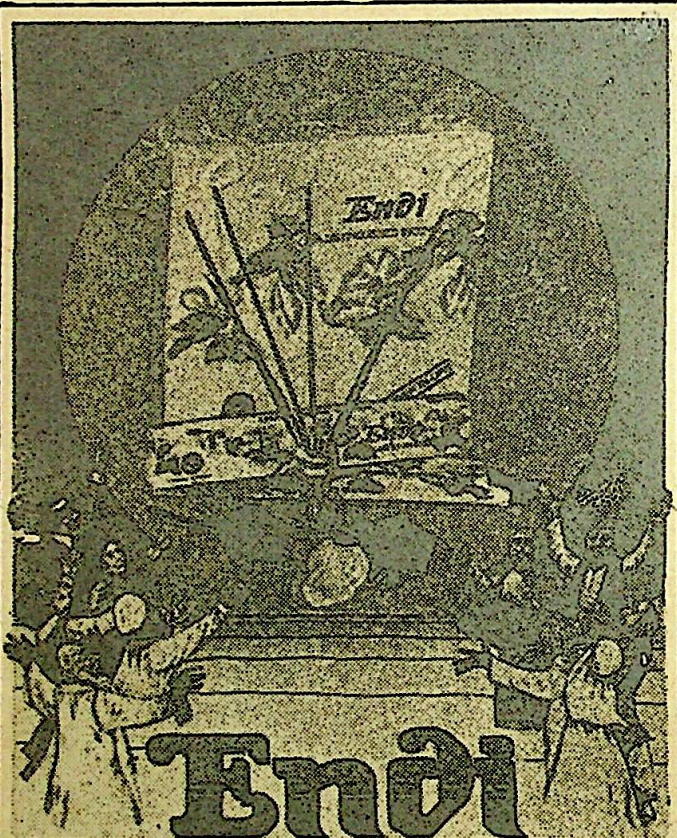
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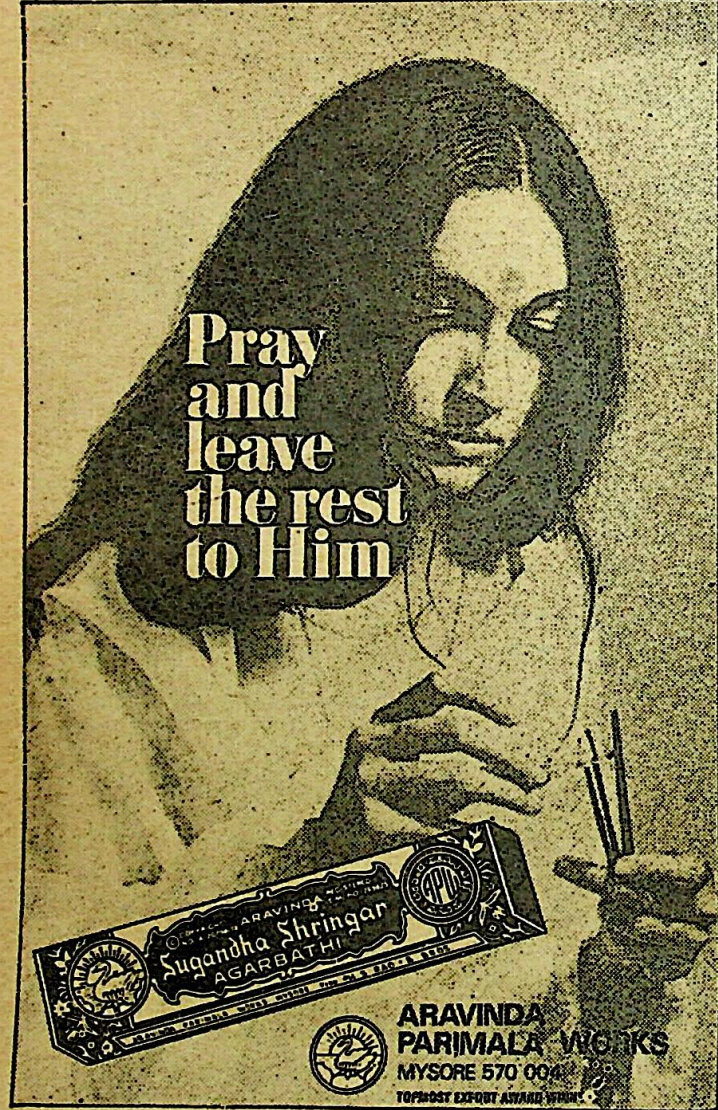
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OUR COVER

Ghaffar Khan and Pandit
Jawaharlal Nehru

Artist : N. A. Padmashali



**Pray
and
leave
the rest
to Him**



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आ नो भद्राः क्र्तवो यस्तु विश्वतः

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

Rigveda I-89-i

PRAYER

ममैतः—पञ्चमि—शिवं—एकं—अनन्तं—आद्यं—
वेदान्तवेद्यं—अद्वैतं—पुरुषं—सर्वशक्तं—
नामादिबद्धरहितं—ब्रह्मावस्थानं
संसारविहरं—ओषधं—अद्वितीयम्

At dawn I worship Shiva, the One, Infinite, the Prime cause taught only by Vedanta, the Pure One, the Supreme Being, who is devoid of the differentiations of name, etc., as well as the six modifications — birth, existence, growth, maturity, decay and death — and who is the one infallible remedy for the afflictions of relative existence (Samsara).

— Shivapradhakshamapana
— Stotra



VOICE OF WISDOM

Self-control takes one to the gods. Want of it will push one into utter darkness.

★ ★ ★

There is no possession more precious than self-control. Watch it therefore as you would watch a treasure.

★ ★ ★

It is well for every one to be meek, but for those who have wealth, meekness is an added possession.

★ ★ ★

If a man lives a life of self-control and withdraws the five senses from tempting pleasures as a tortoise draws its head and legs into a shell when it senses danger, he shall have insured himself against evil in seven births thereafter.

★ ★ ★

You may neglect everything else, but be ever vigilant in restraining your tongue. Those who fail in this meet with great trouble.

★ ★ ★

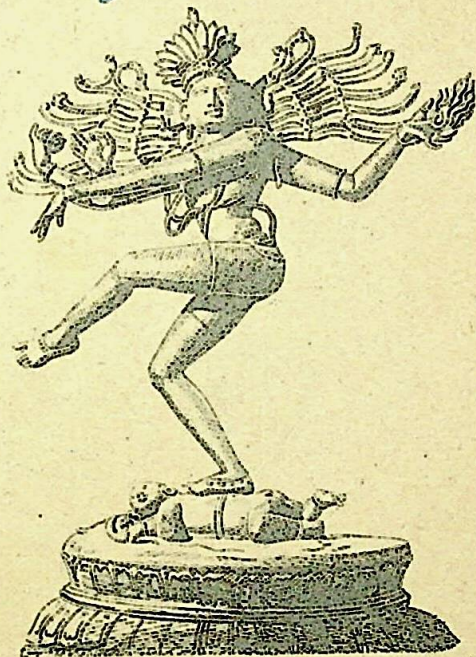
The injury caused by a burn heals, but the pain caused by the thoughtless word is never forgotten. It remains for ever in the mind like an ugly scar.

★ ★ ★

If a man knows how to control the rising anger in his mind and guards himself against losing his temper, all other virtues will seek him out and wait on his pleasure.

—From 'Tirukkural', a Tamil Classic

A Hymn to Siva



You came as the silent teacher mine,
Ready to grant all boons however rare,
And with a mother's love you did unfold
Decking my head with those blessed Feet,
The eternal Law of Wisdom's ecstasy,
Bereft of thought or holy word revolved
The superconscious Vision beyond all thought,
of Freedom's final state as one or two,
As Light or Void, Form or Primal sound;
Such is Beatitude; so hast Thou taught
Grant me thy Grace, Oh Lord to live that life
Wherein are steeped time-honoured lovers thine.

—St. Tayumanavar

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भक्तत्वधर्मो धर्मो वा सत्यं वा यदि वाऽनृतम् ।

यत्त्वया संश्रुतं मद्यं तस्य नास्ति व्यतिक्रमः ॥

“Be it righteousness or unrighteousness, truth or even untruth, there shall be no transgression of what has been promised me by you.

भरतेनात्मना चाहं शपे ते मनुजाधिप ।

यथा नान्येन तुष्येयमृते रामविवासनात् ॥

By Bharata and by my own self, I swear to you, O Lord of men! I will not be satisfied with anything but the banishment of Rama.”

एतावदुक्तवा वचनं कैकेयी विराम ह ।

दीनया तु गिरा राजा इति होवाच कैकेयीम् ॥

Having said thus much, Kaikeyi stopped? In a distressed voice the king spoke to Kaikeyi as follows :



न कथञ्चित्ते रामाद्भरतो राज्यमावसेत् ।
रामादपि हि तं मन्ये धर्मतो बलवत्तरम् ॥

"Without Rama, Bharata will certainly not abide in the kingdom. I consider him to be firmer even than Rama in righteousness.

यदा यदा हि कौसल्या दासीवच्च सखीव च ।
भार्यावद्भगिनीवच्च मातृवच्चोपतिष्ठति ।
सततं प्रियकामा मे प्रियपुत्रा प्रियंवदा ।
न मया सत्कृता देवी सत्कारार्हा कृते तव ॥

Whenever Kausalya has attended on me like a maid, like a friend, like a wife, like a sister and like a mother, she who ever desired my good, who bore my favourite son, and who spoke so as to please,—though she deserved considerate treatment, got none at my hands on your account.



मया ह्यपितृकः पुत्रः स महात्मा दुरात्मना ।
तं तु मां जीवलोकोऽयं नूनमाक्रोष्टुमर्हति ॥

Besides, that high-souled son Rama is deprived of his patrimony by me of mean soul. Verily, the race of men might justly execrate me.

नालं द्वितीयं वचनं पुत्रो मां प्रतिभाषितुम् ।
यदि मे राघवः कुर्याद्वनं गच्छेति चोदितः ॥

My son is not capable of uttering even
a remonstrance. If directed to go to the
forest, my Raghava will do it.

प्रतिद्वलं प्रियं मे स्यान्न तु वत्सः करिष्यति ।
शुद्धभावो हि भावं मे न तु ज्ञास्यति राघवः ॥

My child will not do the contrary thing,
though it might (really) please me. Being
pure in thought, he will not understand my
(real) wish.

स वनं प्रव्रजेत्युक्तो बादमित्येव वक्ष्यति ॥

When told "go to the forest", he will
only say "certainly".

प्रियं चेद्भरतस्यैतद्भामिप्रवाजनं भवेत् ।
मा स ये भरतः कार्षीत् प्रेतकृत्यं गतायुषः ॥

If the banishment of Rama be to the
liking of Bharata, let not Bharata perform
my funeral rites when I am dead.



SRI JAI RAM SRI JAI JAI RAM SRI JAI RAM S

श्रीजयराम श्रीजयराम श्रीजयराम श्रीजयराम
कथं कमलपत्राक्षो मया रामो विवास्यते ॥

How could the lotus-eyed Rama be
banished by me ?

प्रसीद देवि रामो मे त्वदत्तं राज्यमन्ययम् ।

लभतामसितागङ्गे यशः परमवाप्नुहि ॥

Be gracious, O Queen ! Let my Rama
get this imperishable kingdom as a gift
from you ; so will you whose eyes are dark
at the edges, obtain the highest fame !

मम रामस्य लोकस्य गुरुणां भरतस्य च ।

प्रियमेतद्गुरुश्रोणि कुरु चारुमुखेक्षणे ॥

O you who have heavy hips and beau-
tiful mouth and eyes, do that which will
please me, Rama, the world, the precep-
tors, and also Bharata."

पुत्रशोकादितं पापा सैश्वकमिदमब्रवीत् ॥

To (Dasaratha) the descendant of the
Ikshvakus, thus grieving for his son, the
sinful Kaikeyi said thus :

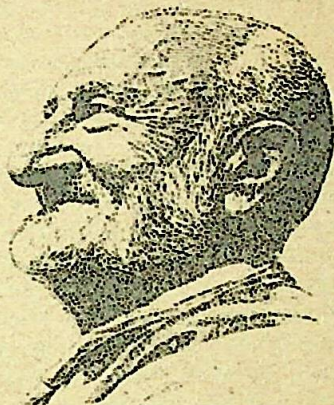
पापं कृत्वेव किमिदं मम संश्रुत्य संश्रवम् ।

शेषे क्षितितले सन्नः स्थित्यां स्थातुं त्वमर्हसि ॥



HOMAGE TO BADSHAH KHAN, THE VISHWA MANAVA

—S. Ramakrishnan



JANUARY 20, 1988: This day will be boldly entered not only in the pages of history but will be indelibly etched in the minds of men and women who believe in the supremacy of eternal values in a changing world — of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, freedom from anger and greed and desire to do good to mankind. (*Srimad Bhagavatam*)

On this day, "a King among men," Badshah Khan, who symbolised these values in thought, word and deed, joined the ranks of the Immortals of History, from the Buddha to Gandhi, from Confucius to Sun Yat-Sen, from Socrates to Martin Luther King.

Bharata Ratna Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who proclaimed to the world that "neither religion nor anything else that is

good can flourish in slavery," was comparable only to Mahatma Gandhi in his all-consuming passion for freedom, in his unconquerable spirit, in his moral stature and abiding faith in non-violence.

Generations to come will wonder at the man who wrought the miracle of transforming the proud, rugged, sensitive and aggressive-minded Pathans of the North-West Frontier Province into a peace-loving community and initiating them in non-violence in their fight against the mighty — first the British and later the Pakistan rulers.

Badshah Khan was a true Servant of God, a **Khudai Kidmatgar**. He intuitively discerned in Gandhiji a kindred spirit. Deep-rooted in the spirit of the religion of his birth, he led a

FEBRUARY 16-29, 1988

pure, ascetic life. At the same time, he was singularly free from fanaticism. He interpreted Islam as a religion of love and, logically, of non-violence. He averred: "There is nothing suprising in a Mussalman or a Pathan like me subscribing to the creed of non-violence. It is not a new creed. It was followed 1,400 years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke. But we had so far forgotten it that, when Mahatmaji placed it before us, we thought he was sponsoring a novel creed. To him belongs the credit of being the first among us to revive a forgotten creed and to place it before a nation for the redress of its grievances."

Deenabandhu C.F. Andrews described Badshah Khan as a "king among men by stature and dignity of bearing." But this king was a personification of humility, simplicity and selflessness. When the Frontier Gandhi — he was never happy when he was so called — went to Bardoli in 1931, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others, who went to receive him, found him emerging from a third class coach with a small hand-bag which contained one set of clothes for a change and a timetable!

Ghaffar Khan's pilgrimage on earth was a long one — 98 years — but nearly 30 of them were spent in jail. Suffering and sacrifice are the two badges of humanity. He lived for others. He lived for values. He was will-



ing cheerfully to pay any price for his convictions as Jesus and Gandhi.

History is yet to assess the correctness or otherwise of the acceptance by the Congress of the 'June 3rd Plan' (1947) for the partition of the country. The Congress Working Committee decided on accepting partition and the holding of a referendum in the North-West Frontier Province; the referendum was intended to find out whether the Pakhtoons would choose to throw in their lot with India or Pakistan. With a heavy heart Ghaffar Khan told Gandhiji and the Working Committee: "We Pakhtoons stood by you and had undergone great sacrifices for attaining freedom, but you have now deserted us and thrown us to the wolves. We shall not agree to hold a referendum because we had decisively won the elections on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan and proclaimed the Pakhtoon view of it to the world. Now as India has disowned us, why should we have a referendum on Hindustan and Pakistan? Let it be on Pakhtoonistan or Pakistan."

Simple and straightforward, Badshah-Khan had no use for tortuous diplomacy. He refused to gamble with the destiny of 10 million Pakhtoons. He con-

sidered the referendum on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan "as an arbitrament of a lucky throw in a game to be played with loaded dice." Gandhiji considered it a fraud. He refused to be a party to it and left the decision to Badshah Khan and his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, the Congress Premier of N.W.F.P. in 1937-39 and in 1946. They considered the referendum to be on a false issue and desired the issue to be amended. This was not done and they declined to participate. (Facsimile of Badshah Khan's letter dated June 11, 1947 to Mahatmaji is reproduced separately.)

Naturally, the referendum went in favour of Pakistan. Thereafter, Gandhiji told Ghaffar Khan that his (Khan's) duty was "to make Pakistan Pak (pure)". As Badshah Khan took leave, on July 30, 1947, he told Gandhiji's entourage:

"Mahatmaji has shown us the true path. Long after we are no more, the coming generations of Hindus will remember him as an avatar like Lord Krishna, Muslims as God's messenger, and Christians as another Prince of Peace."

Free India never forgot the Frontier Gandhi. He was invited

Pkawan
11. 6. 1947

My dear Mahatma Ji,

I recd. your
letter & that of Jawahar
Lal Ji today. This
evening a joint meeting
of the Members of the
F.P.C.C., Congress Parliamentary
Party & the Leaders of the
Khudai Khidmatgars was
held for about four hours.
Representatives from all
over the Province took
part in the meeting. The
Consensus of opinion

No. Referendum on False Issue : Badshah Khan's letter to Gandhiji. "The
consensus of opinion was that we should not participate in the referendum ...
all desired that the issue should be amended ..."

was that we should not
take part in the Referendum
on the issue in para 4A
of the Announcement. They
all desired that the
issues should be decided
on the basis of Pakistan
& free Pathan State. Action
will only be taken after
I have consulted you.

I will reach Delhi on
Friday evening by air.

How can it be
possible for you to
withhold your guidance
from us at this critical
juncture.

Yours truly

Abdullah Khan

to India during the Gandhi Centenary Year in 1969 and was given the Nehru Award for International Understanding. He was invited to the Congress Centenary in 1985. He was given the best medical treatment when he was seriously ill during May, 1987. He was also honoured with India's highest civilian award, the **Bharata Ratna**. On his death, the Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi specially flew to Peshawar to pay his respects and the country was plunged into mourning. India's Vice-President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, led a delegation to Jalalabad to attend the funeral of Badshah Khan.

Ghaffar Khan, the Man of God, the Apostle of Peace and Non-Violence, was truly a Universal Man — **Vishwa Manava**.

"Long after the wielders of power and brandishers of sword

have been forgotten," Rashtrapati R. Venkataraman observed aptly, "the name of **Badshah Khan** will echo and re-echo from the rocky vastnesses of Khyber proclaiming the **Fatherhood of God** and the **Brotherhood of Man**."

Badshah Khan was an embodiment of the best in Indian culture. He honoured us by visiting the Central Bhavan when he was here in 1969 after 23 years of the vivisection of our motherland. He granted a special interview to the **Bhavan's Journal** at Sevagram on his historic visit to participate in the Gandhi Centenary celebrations. We reproduce the message Shri Jayaprakash Narayan (who was with Badshah Khan throughout his 1969 visit) gave to the **Bhavan's Journal**. It succinctly sums up the intrinsic greatness of this Messiah.



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As Vinobaji said at the All India Sarvodaya Sammelan at Rajgir, Badshah Khan's coming to India after 23 years is as if Gandhiji himself had come back to life again. The simple, yet sublime, message of truth, love and ^{selfless} service that he has been preaching; the healing touch that he ~~is~~ is applying to the wounds of hatred & bigotry; the lapses & failings he has been warning us against have brought to

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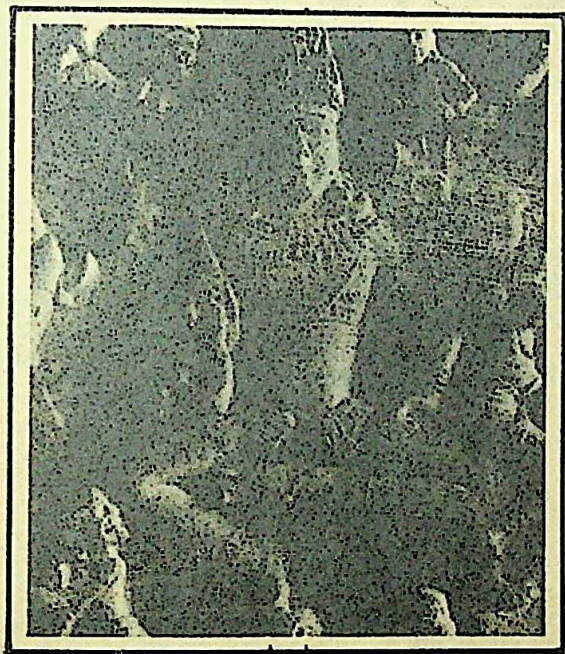
the public life of this country
a breath of freshness &
purity that might bring it
back to health; and to the
common people a ray of
hope and faith that may
sustain them ~~to~~ in
their present hardships and
guide them through to a
better destiny.

Jayaprakash Narayan
Sewagram
6.11.69

the public life of this country a breath of freshness and purity that might
bring it back to health; and to the common people a ray of hope and faith
that may sustain them in their present hardships and guide them through
to a better destiny.
Sewagram
6-11-69.

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

A Dialogue on The Nature of Siva



Perhaps the most important part of *Kumarasambhavam* is the fifth canto. Parvati first failed to win over Siva by beauty of form. She resorted to tapas. The tapas is about to bear fruit. But she is subjected to a genuine test. Siva, before he is willing to become Parvati's *dasa* — he says

at the end: *tavasmi dasah; kritah tapobhih*; I am thy servant, for thou hast bought me over with thy tapas — subjects her to a searching test. This test and the result of it are embodied in this dialogue on the nature of Siva Himself.

The ascetic in disguise begins



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his speech in a tone of irony after he hears the confirmatory words of Parvati.

Ah, he says drawling out the words, who does not know Siva? The wonder is you seem to be fascinated by such a person, one who is given to all kinds of inauspicious and un-becoming practices!

The *Brahmacharin* disapproves of Parvati's conduct and would never emulate her in this.

He then proceeds to list one after another the unfavourable aspects of Siva's personality in order to dissuade Parvati from her intended course of action. The *Brahmacharin* is no mean poet; look at his words that create disgusting and repellant images in the mind of the readers. He asks Parvati to think of the scene when she is likely to be married to this Siva. She has to let Siva take her by the hand, a hand that would be bedecked with the jewelled bracelet of a bride. But what is it that adorns Siva's hand, a slimy loathsome reptile, a snake. Would you like Siva take you by the hand, he asks. The first contact with the beloved, a priced one, one that each couple remembers for the rest of their lives, to turn out to be such a repellant one! Will such a first

contact conduce to a happy future?

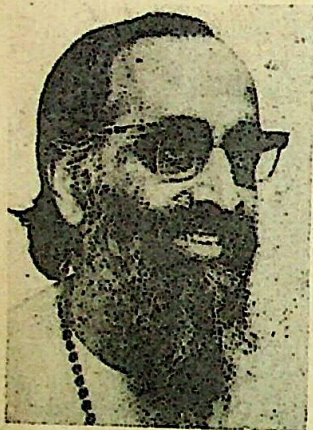
He proceeds further. Look at another anomalous thing, something that does not go together. He says to Parvati: You will be draped in silken robes, richly brocaded, displaying beautiful swan-like figures, while your Lord that is to be, stands by the side wearing elephant-hide, from which trickles blood in drops.

Not even by sworn enemy, O Parvati, would condemn thee to walk on the funeral ground where lie scattered the tresses of mourning folk. Would you like to tread such ground when it was thy won't to take a stroll on paths that were carpeted with flowers?

These images might remind Parvati of things that are somewhat distant, the hands and the feet that will touch and tread. But the ascetic draws her mind to something closer, her heaving bosom, well-shaped and unguented with the sandal paste. Will you let thy Lord's ashes besmear those lovely breasts?

He heaps another poser in quick succession. Just think of one more thing. Your Lord rides an old bull. It was your habit to ride an elephant that vied with the *Airavata* of In-

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"Dwarak is dear to me....
He has a style of his own,
pure, chiselled, to express
the beauty of his soaring
thoughts

"While enjoying his
poetic-prose, dive deep to
reach the **unsaid.**"

—Swami Chinmayananda

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Mahasivaratri Vrata

A brief description of how Sivaratri Vrata was performed in ancient times may be gathered from Garudapurana. After honouring Siva on the 13th tithi of the dark half of Magha, the man who is to undertake the vrata should resolve to observe certain restrictions. He should declare, 'O God, I shall keep awake the whole night on the 14th tithi. I shall make according to my ability worship, gifts, austerities and 'homa.' O Sambhul on 14th I shall take no food and shall take food on the next day. Oh Lord! be thou my refuge for securing enjoyment of happiness ad moksa.'

The person observing the vrata should approach a teacher and should bathe (the linga) with 'pancagavya' and 'pancamrta'. He should repeat the mantra, 'Om namah Sivaya'. He should worship Siva with the upacaras beginning with sandalwood paste and he should offer into fire sesame, grains of rice and boiled rice mixed with ghee. After this homa he should offer 'purnahuti' (an offering made with a full ladle) and listen to music and good stories (about Siva).

He should again offer offerings at midnight, in the 3rd quarter of the night and in the 4th quarter. Having inaudibly repeated the mulamantra (Om Namah Sivaya) he should pray to Siva about daybreak to forgive his sins with the words 'O God! I have worshipped in this vrata without obstacles through your favour; O Lord of the worlds! O Sival pardon me. Whatever merit I have won this day and whatever has been offered by me to Siva, I have finished this vrata today through your favour; O bountiful one! be pleased with me, and go to your abode; there is no doubt that I have become pure by merely seeing you.' He should feed persons who are devoted to contemplating (on Siva) and should give to them garments, umbrellas and the like; 'O Lord of Gods! lord of all things that bestoweth favour on people! may my lord be gratified by what I have given with faith.' Having thus prayed for forgiveness, the person undertaking this vrata may carry it on for twelve years.

(From Mahamahopadyaya P.V. Kane's
'History of Dharmashastra'
Vol. V, Part I)

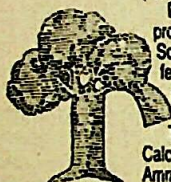


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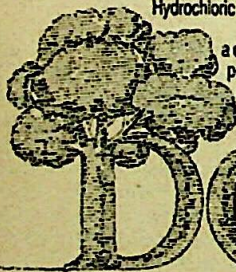
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dra. What will the great ones think as they see you riding such a bull with thy Lord? How will you bear to see their intrigued smile?

After listening to all these unfavourable things, as if in great desperation, the *Brahmacharin* speaks aloud to himself. He bemoans the sad state of affairs. He thinks of one more who was deluded, the bright-orbed maiden, the moon. As if he is giving up this quest of his to dissuade Parvati, he says: Two things in this world have now invited a mournful fate on themselves; one, the orbed maiden, the moon, by her desire to be on the head of Siva; two, you the cynosure of the world by this desire for marriage.

Finally he sums up his argument:

Just think of these, Parvati, he says. Has your Lord that is to be, any one of the qualities necessary for a bride-groom? Is he fair? Has he wealth? For if he had, would he take the four quarters for his clothes and remain semi-naked? Further, to what *kula* or clan does he belong? No one knows his birth.

Please give up this useless quest of something that is unbecoming, *asat*. Do hermit-folk waste their time decorating an execution stake as they would

a sacred pole at the altar of religious sacrifices?

The *Brahmacharin* has finished his unfavourable account of Siva. That is how Siva would appear to one that does not know the truth about Him. As the prime mover, he has placed his case, convincing by the heap of disgusting and unfavourable images.

We can just imagine what must have been happening to Parvati. She would have given up this futile quest, if indeed it was futile, after the burning of Madana. But her mind was set on Siva. Why was it set on Siva? It was because she knew her Lord much better than this ascetic. Her conception of Siva was entirely different.

Parvati was enraged but she was of noble birth and her gentle manners would never lead her to unbecoming speech that took on the complexion of a retort. One could easily guess her anger and dissatisfaction, for her brows were knit and her eyes shot red and the lips went a-tremble? But she brought these under her control and replied to the ascetic thus.

Well, my friend, she said, you evidently know not Siva as He is. For, how else could you have spoken thus?

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Then Parvati counters every-one of the charges of the ascetic.

You said he was given to in-auspicious practices. Well, just think, why do people resort to auspicious acts and customs? For they wish to avert some danger or calamity or they are desirous of greater prosperity. But has the Lord, who is the refuge of all, who has no desires of his own, any need for these means, only undertaken by those that are bedevilled with desires?

Parvati gives us a memorable verse. Kalidasa was fond of this idea. In his play, *Mala-vikaagnimitra*, he has put the same in a different way in the verse *ekaishvarye sthithopi*, etc. Look at the paradoxes: Siva has nothing, but he is the origin of all wealth; Lord of all the three worlds, but stationed in the burial ground; of fierce form but called Siva, the auspicious, the gentle; well, are there people who really know the truth about Siva?

These are human concep-tions, anthropomorphised and projected. Can they be the



truth? Can the mind of man, limited and limping as it is, comprehend Divinity?

Can the poor intellect of man comprehend Siva? No. He is only known by those who have experienced his being: *Sva-nubhutyekamaanaaya*, says Bhartrihari, the great writer of the Hundred Verses on Niti and Vairagya.

Parvati proceeds further. Have the wise people finally said: This is the Form of Siva. Is there any finality about this? Who knows whether He is adorned with jewels or with a snake, whether He wears elephant-hide or silken garments?

Look at Parvati's answer for that erotic suggestion concerning the funeral pyre ashes coming into contact with her breasts.

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All vestiges of Kama have disappeared from her mind.

Don't you know, O deluded one, that these ashes acquire a sanctity when they come into contact with Siva's body? How else do you explain the great eagerness of the heavenly beings who mark their body with these ashes that are shaken down when Siva dances in great sport?

Maybe Siva rides on an old bull. But what is it that makes Indra dismount his celestial elephant and touch the feet of Siva with his crowned head?

If the ascetic is a poet, is not Parvati a greater Poetess? As *shakti* supreme she is the cause of all poetry.

Irony of a different type she employs.

O ascetic, with a soul that has lost its real moorings, you

seem to have at last grudgingly rendered a compliment to Siva. You were certainly right when you said that Siva's birth is unknown. How can any one know that, for he is the cause of all causes? Parvati has answered effectively all the charges, but she is aware also that reason can never succeed fully in matters that go beyond reason. Such is the nature of the Highest Lord.

She is disgusted with such arguments. She has realised how futile mere argument is. As Plato says: the beginner like a puppy might tear and pull but the adept soon tires of this jugglery. So she winds up the debate by saying: Well, let us put an end to this dispute. You are at liberty to have your own notions. As for me, my mind, which is filled with the thought of Siva and which has experienced the bliss arising from that, cares not for slighting words of others.

So, that is the dialogue on the nature of Siva, worth reading and pondering over again and again. Every word employed by Parvati is richly loaded with meaning. There are echoes of the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgita* and all the other great books in each one of these words. □ □ □

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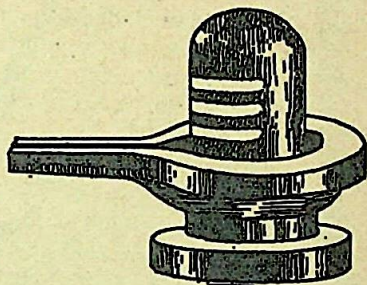
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The 63 Saivite Saints

G. Vanmikinathan

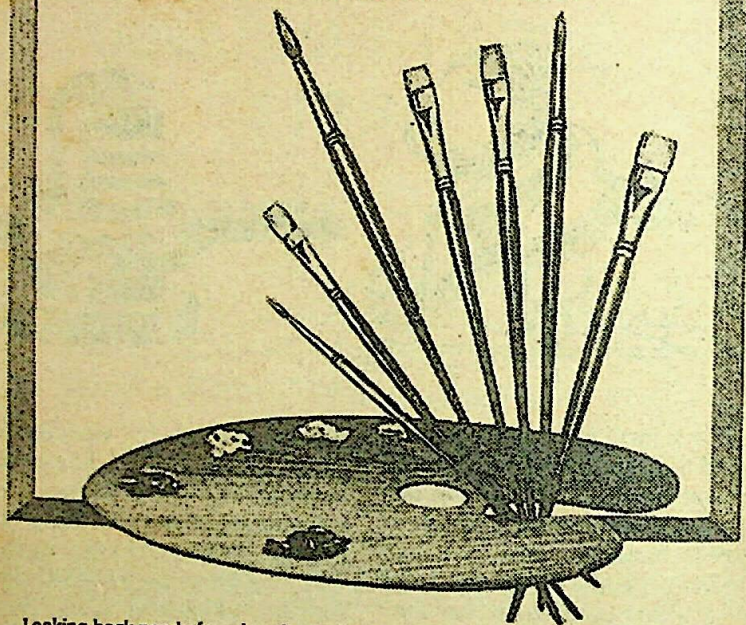


The saints of Tamilnadu never asked God for a favour. They did not even pray for *mukti*. On this account there prevails a phrase in Tamil, namely, '*veedum venda viralinar*', people of the repute of not wanting even *mukti*. But they prayed for admission to the galaxy of devotees. They held this as the highest reward of devotion to God. Such an admission was tantamount to conferment of *mukti* even while alive in this world. Sri C.K. Subrahmaniya Mudaliyar, the great commentator on Sekkizhar's *Periya-puranam*, observes: "Joining the galaxy of devotees is the blessing mentined in *Calva-Siddhaantha* as the

blessing gained by worship of Lord Civan." Maanikavachakar, one of the four *samaya-kuravars*, Fathers of Faith, (the others being Thirugnanasambandar, Thirunavukkarasar and Sundaramoorthi Swamikal, prayed for the privilege of admission to the galaxy of devotees in the beginning, middle, and end; in fact, throughout the whole of his famous work, *The Thiruvachakam*, the Handbook of Mystical Theology.

If the *Periya-puranam* was only a hagiography, of whatever merit it may be, it would not command the kind of study by the learned

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and the laymen alike as it actually does. But it is a revolutionary work in more than one sense. Let us examine its characteristics one by one.

As a country in the olden days was composed principally of several villages, the village was the self-sufficient unit of a country. The self-sufficiency of a village in India, and perhaps of all countries, was something unique. At the bottom of the structure of the community life in an Indian village was the *Pulayan*, a person who, according to Saint Thirunavukkarasar, though he is one who eats the offal of a dead cow, is worthy of worship as God if he is a devotee of Lord Civan. Others in the structure were the hunter, the fisherman, the potter, the weaver, the washerman, the barber *cum* physician and surgeon, the toddy-tapper, the oil-monger, the grocer or the merchant, the cowherd, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the farmer, the temple priest, the *Vedic* brahmin, the Chieftain, and the king. All these categories of a village community except a carpenter and a blacksmith are represented in the *Periyan-puranam*. The crafts of six of the saints are not given by Sekkizhar in his work. They are Eripaththar, Kanampullar,

Kariyar, Kulachchiraiyar, Peru-mizhalai-k-kurumbur, and Thandi-adigal. Thandiatigal was a blind man from birth, and therefore, was not plying any craft. Kariyar was a poet. Kanampullar was a rich merchant who had fallen on evil days. He should have been classified as a *vanikar*, a merchant. Kulachchiraiyar was the Chief Minister of a Pandiyan King, and, therefore, would have been a *velaalar*. *Peru-mizhalai-k-kurumbur* was a pretty-chieftain. This leaves only Eripaththar who could have been a blacksmith. He could well have been one.



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Perhaps, he forged his own hatchet with which he hacked down the elephant of the king. Perhaps, he followed the profession of a carpenter as well.

In writing the chronicles of the saints, Sekkizhar was not giving any importance to castes but the crafts they followed to earn their livelihood, the crafts which also served as their means of service. In no more than two cases out of the sixty-three does Sekkizhar use the name of a *Varna*. He uses the word *soodara*. In the cases in which he used the word 'brahmin', he did not so much refer to the caste as to the craft the persons followed in their lives. That is, the discharge of the prescribed six duties — learning, teaching; performing sacrifices and conducting sacrifices on behalf of others; giving and receiving of gifts. It was a fossilization that took place because of troubled conditions in society. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that Sundarar when he sang the *Thiru-th-thonda-th-tokai* and Sekkizhar when he wrote his *Periya-puranam*, both proclaimed the greatest truth, that is, that everyone irrespective of caste or craft is entitled to gain *mukti*, freedom from the cycle of births and deaths. When Saint Manik-



kavachakar sang "Behold Eesan, whom everyone is entitled to apprehend," he was uttering a phrase which is the kenyanote of the *Periya-puranam*. It is the first and foremost characteristic of the *Periya-puranam*. Country, creed, craft, caste, sex, language — nothing is a bar to a person apprehending the Godhead.

Love, creature-oriented and creator-oriented, is the only qualification required of an aspirant for *mukti*. It must be total love, selfless love — a love which opens the gates of salvation to any one irrespective of one's birth in any caste or community.

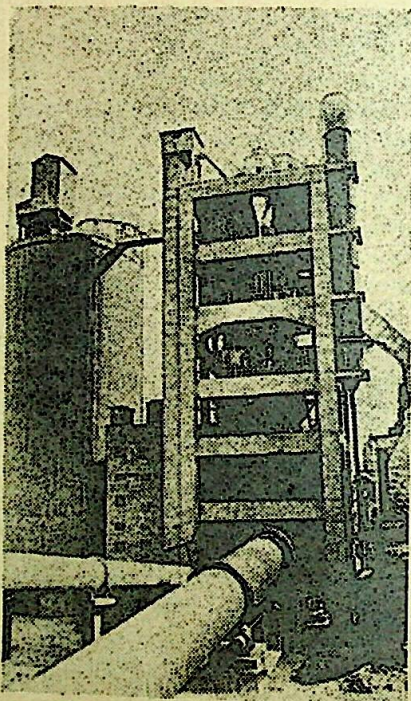
The second characteristic of the *Periya-puranam*, or, rather, of the saints whose lives are chronicled in the *Periya-*

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puranam, is that all of them were householders. They were married men with wives and children. In the case of twenty saints, the chronicles make special mention of their married state. In the case of others, this can be inferred from the particulars of the lives of the saints. All of them had occupations of their own which served as means of their livelihood, and, what is more unique about them, as means of service as well. The very first saint mentioned in Sundarar's Calendar of Saints, Thiruneelakanta-kuyavanar — Thiruneelakandar the Potter — baked pots and pans for sale to provide him a living, and, at the same time, baked alms-bowls to give away to devotees. This was the form, his desire to do service to fellowmen took. Thirukkurippu-th-thondar was a washerman. He laundeed clothes for his living. He washed clothes of devotees free of any charge and thus served his fellowmen.

All the saints chronicled in the *Periya-puranam* were ascetics. Usually we identify ascetism with certain external marks and ways of life. No doubt, ascetism means renunciation. But what these saints renounced was not their kith and kin, their hut or hamlet, or their locks, or their occupations. What they gave up was

meat, anger, theft, killing, pride, hurting others, conduct not becoming a righteous man. Attachment and desire were two other things they renounced. What they donned was not external clothing of ochre cloth. They were qualities of the heart. What they donned were not externals. They donned truthfulness, *ahimsa* (not hurting any creature), cheerful endurance of privations, austerity of life. In the externals they were no different in appearance than their neighbours, they were householders like the rest of the people in their village.



*The Lord's name is is the ocean of peace;
Through the Guru is He attained.
Dwell on Him day after day,
That thou mergest imperceptibly in his name.*

— Guru Nanak

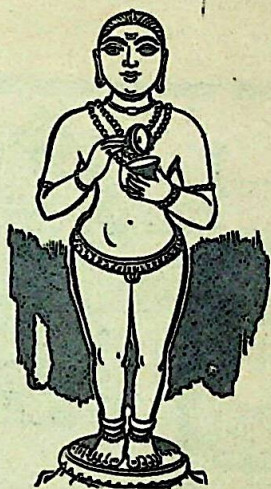
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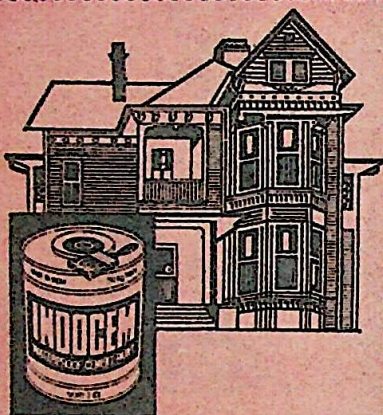
In heart, they were ascetics. In thought, word, and deed they were ascetics. They were ascetics according to the age-old Tamil traditions. They were the ascetics who were portrayed by Thiruvalluvar in his Section on Asceticism in his *Thirukkural*. This is the third characteristic of the saints portrayed in the *Periyan*.

These sixty-three saints had washed out the *malam*, the taint which would prevent one from embracing the feet of the Lord. And they consorted with other devotees. In fact, the privilege of consorting with other devotees was their only wish, was their only prayer to God. And they worshipped devotees as verily Lord Civan Himself. When they did not worship the devotees themselves as *Haran* i.e. Civan Himself, they worshipped the temple of Lord Civan as the Lord Himself. Service of every kind, to the providing of premises and keeping it free of dirt and weeds, to the providing of oil for the lamps of the temple, to the providing of wicks for those lamps, to the providing of incense, all these and more services were the forms of the worship of the temple of *Haran*, done by some of the devotees. But with the Lord, worship of the devotees



and worship of the temple, both counted as worship of Himself. This is the fourth characteristic of the saints whose lives are chronicled in the *Periyan*.

True it is that this Love is not developed in one day. It is not developed in one life either. It takes several births to develop this kind of love, a love which makes a prisoner of God in one's heart. Manikkavachakar sang: "Behold God who falls into the net called Love." While it is admittedly a quality very difficult to come by, it is the one quality any human being without exception can acquire. Sex, caste, creed, language, nationality, profession, poverty or wealth — nothing will stand in the

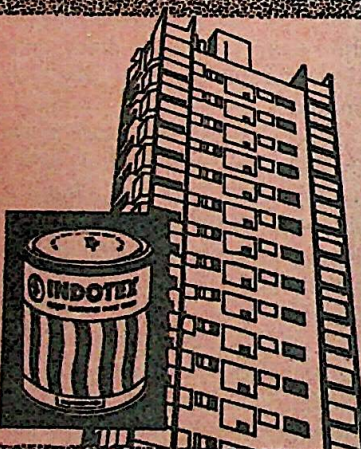


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way of a human being acquiring this qualification by which one can imprison God in one's heart. And this was the trap that every one of the sixty-three saints set down to capture God. This is the fifth and greatest characteristic of all the saints whose lives have been chronicled in the *Periya-puranam*. Without this characteristic, the first characteristic of the *Periya-puranam* becomes null and void.

For, by no other means can any human being become entitled to apprehend God.

The sixth and final characteristic which distinguishes the saints whose lives have been chronicled in the *Periya-puranam* is that all of them without exception extirpated desire, tore it off, root and branch and roasted the seeds of the plant so that there might not be any further crop of that horrible weed.

“Periya Puranam”

Tamil Nadu is the hallowed ground of mystics, saints and sages. Like the Gangetic plain, which is known as the cradle of 'bhakti', the land of the Cauvery in the South is no less renowned for nurturing bhakti. Two separate traditions have helped to swell the tide of devotion to God: the Saivite tradition with 63 saints called 'Nayanmars' and the Vaishnavite tradition with 12, called 'Alvars.'

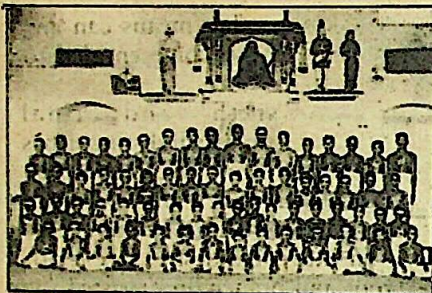
The Saivite Canon consists of twelve sacred compilations called 'Tirumurais.' The first seven, collectively called 'Thevaram', are the outpourings of three saints, viz. Tirugnanasambandar, Appar and Sundarar; the 8th, called 'Tiruvachakam', is the work of Manikavachagar; the 9th is a collection of hymns by various saints; the 10th, called 'Tirumandiram,' is the work of Saint Tirumular; the 11th is another miscellaneous collection; the 12th is the great epic, known in Tamil as 'Periya Puranam' of Sekkizhar. Periapuranam narrates the lives of the 63 Tamil Saivite

saints, the Nayanmars who, forming a mighty aggregate, "assert eternal Providence and exemplify the ways of the Divine to purblind humanity."

Shri G. Vanmikinathan has brought a condensed English version of the 'Periya Puranam.' It is not a mere translation of the original but the work of a scholar-devotee who takes the entire world literature on saints and mystics for his province. The hagiography of the 63 saints is illumined by Shri Vanmikinathan's wide-ranging commentary.

We reproduce here a extract from Shri Vanmikinathan's Preamble I of the book which should be of particular interest to our readers, in connection with Sivaratri.

The book, published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-4, carries a preface by Shri N. Mahalingam, well-known industrialist and philanthropist, and a foreword by the distinguished litterateur, Dr. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar.



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When Goddess Uma Trembled

V. S. R. K.



MOUNT Kailas, ever a snowy waste, rang with laughter, loud and clear, which echoed from every quarter. The Eternal Lovers, the Parents of the Universe, forgot for a while even their devotees! Siva, the Yogin, after His marriage, had been showing signs of a great fall from his permanent state of peace. And His spouse, Uma the Universal Mother, was only too ready to take advantage of this to tease Her Lord. After all, did He not make Her go through an ordeal to secure His hand? So many years of penance in freezing cold and amidst howling winds!

Uma wanted to get away for a while even from Siva — such was Siva's ardour! It was all right when He made a garland of some sylvan flowers and put it round her neck. But why did He

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stealthily come from behind and startle her when she was looking into a mirror? Well, she could also put up with His prank of closing her eyes from behind. Then, why should he suddenly become invisible and catch her unawares, in a tight embrace?

A lovely smile appeared almost involuntarily on Maheswari's face as she thought of Siva in the firm grip of Kama, the God of Love. Who said that Siva was the enemy of Kama, the Kamanthaka?

As Dakshayani was thus lost in pleasant thoughts, a few rain drops fell on her. Looking up, she saw dark clouds fast gathering over the sky as a mass of elephants. It dawned on her suddenly that all along she and her lord had only the sky as the roof over them.

"Siva! Siva! what kind of life I have been leading? Let alone ornaments which I do not fancy much. Should I not have at least a place which I shall call as **my** house?"

Thinking thus, Kanya rushed to her Lord's side (who had been looking at her intently) and said:

"O Pinakapanin, tossed by gusts of wind the clouds do not remain steady in any place, they rumble and appear as if they would fall on our heads. The swans are flying away to the distant Manasa lake. Even crows

and Chakora birds have their nests. But you don't have any, rather you don't care to have any. Without a home, how can we be happy?"

Siva, laughingly, replied:

"Oh my beloved, clouds will do no harm to us. Yet, as you want a home — who does not? — tell me quickly where you want to have one — here in Kailas, on the Himalayas or on Sumeru?

"The Himalayas, the king of mountains! It is perpetual spring over there. It is the place where everything is calm and peaceful except for the cooing of the cuckoos. It is the favourite resort of sages and the devas. It abounds in lakes and it shines with ramparts of crystals, gold and silver. You can have the company of Menaka and the Siddha and Naga women.

"If Meru be your choice, Queen Sachi along with Rambha and Menaka will be attending on you. You may also choose to remain here itself, this Kailas, shining by the side of Kubera's Alaka. This is pure and holy, as Ganga flows over here."

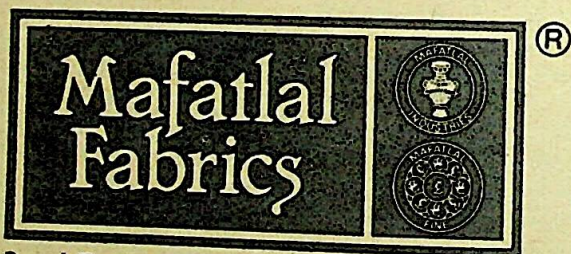
At the mention of Ganga, Nalini smirked and said emphatically, "Let it be the Himalayas."

Siva lost no time in moving over to the Himalayas. He chose a very beautiful site for the house

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on the top of the mountain. There were flowers everywhere, in fullbloom, filling the ambient air with their fragrance. Different kinds of birds flitted by Chakravakas, swans, geese, cranes. Divine beings, male and female, roamed the place in gay abandon. The celestial damsels played on their lutes, tabours and drums and danced.

Siva and Sati felt quite at home in the new environment. Siva was delirious with joy and never left Shobana alone.

One day, mischievous as ever, Sambhavi posed a question to Siva: "Oh Pasupati, can you tell me an occasion when I was terribly afraid?"

Siva roared with laughter. "Maheswari, to think of the Mother of the Universe being afraid! Isn't it said of you by Gods and men:

"Durgesmrta harasi
bheetim aseshajantoh?"

"My Lord, I was indeed afraid. Do you remember, you wanted to kill the person who gave me the fright."

Siva thought for a while and then exclaimed. "Oh, you are referring to that wily Brahma?"

"Yes, Brahma was the priest at our marriage. When we were go-

"When called to mind in a difficult pass, you remove the fear of all creatres" — *Devi Mahatmya* 4 — 17

ing round the fire, Brahma was looking at my feet. I was conscious of it and was acutely embarrassed. Then all of a sudden, it happened. The place was filled with smoke. because Brahma placed some wet faggots in the fire. And in the enveloping semi-darkness he made bold to look at my face by lifting my veil. You got angry with him and wanted to kill him."

"I do remember. It was all done deliberately by me. Otherwise, would Brahma have dared to look at you?"

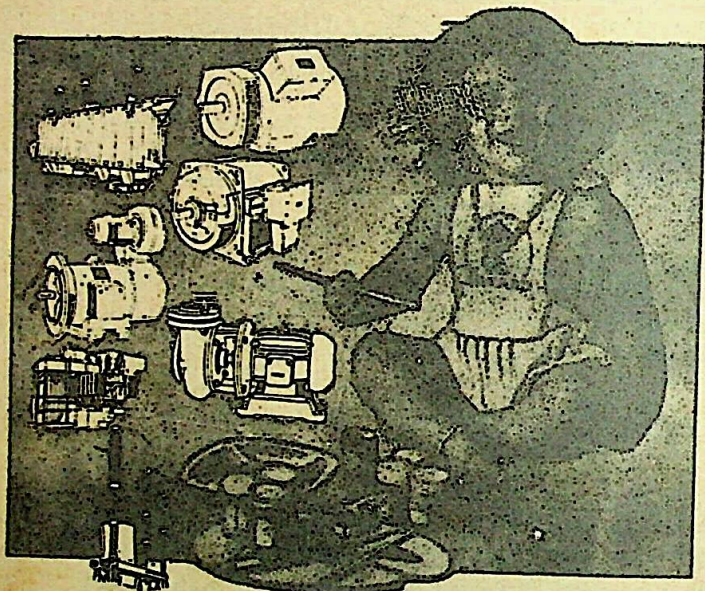
"Deliberately? I do not understand you, my Lord."

"Yes, I wanted Brahma to be an example to mortals."

"An example? Looking at a women's face stealthily, that an an example!"

"Listen, my lady. When mortals pray they should do so in a spirit of devotion, of surrender. I have already told you: 'There is no difference between devotion and perfect knowledge. A person who is engrossed in devotion enjoys perpetual happiness. Perfect knowledge never descends in a vicious person averse to devotion.' In the Age of Kali, the path of devotion is the most appropriate for one seeking Godhead.

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When mortals pray, they should think of the Feet first, and then the Face, of the Gods."

"You mean to say, when men look at women, they should not stare at them".

"That should be the way of the civilised man." Siva said this with

some vehemence and drew closer to Shanta and lovingly looked at Her face.

(Based on an episode in the Rudrasamhita of Shivapurana)

"This has reference to verse 6 of chapter 11 of Devi Mahatmya. All women, it says, are the aspects of Devi.

Shiva's Cosmic Dance



The dance of Shiva is the dancing universe; the ceaseless flow of energy going through an infinite variety of patterns that meet into one another. Modern physics has shown that the rhythm of creation and destruction is not only manifest in the turn of the seasons and in the birth and death of all living creatures, but is also the very essence of inorganic matter. According to the quantum field theory, all interactions between the constituents of matter take

place through the emission and absorption of virtual particles. More than that, the dance of creation and destruction is the basis of the very existence of matter, since all material particles 'self-interact' by emitting and reabsorbing virtual particles. Modern physics has thus revealed that every sub-atomic particle not only performs an energy dance, but also is an energy dance; a pulsating process of creation and destruction.

(Fritjof Capra in "The Tao of Physics")

ULAPPIL — INBAM

*Oh omnipotent Lord !
Oh You Who are more good to me
than the mother who bore me !
Oh life of true gnosis gained by blissful seers !
Showing me the creed of non-killing,
and taking notice of me,
You put up with my evil nature !
I lallowed be Your golden feet !*

— Saint Ramalingar

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Ghaffar Khan — Symbol of Truth and Courage

P. D. Tandon

The history of mankind is essentially the story of its heroes who suffer for their principles. Their sufferings and their achievements tell the people about their heroism and the nobility of their spirit. These kindred souls, it often seems, come to this world only to suffer and remind human beings not to forsake their principles whatever be the consequences.

Ghaffar Khan was one such hero of our age.

Nehru had said, "There is hardly any other person, excepting Mahatma Gandhi, whose work is so widespread and he is the symbol of India's heroism and courage. It is a grievous tragedy that the man who helped greatly in bringing freedom to India and Pakistan and whom any nation would have delighted to honour should become a victim of the very independence that his labours helped to bring. He has been for more than a generation a symbol of truth and fearlessness".

Pakistan kept Ghaffar Khan in



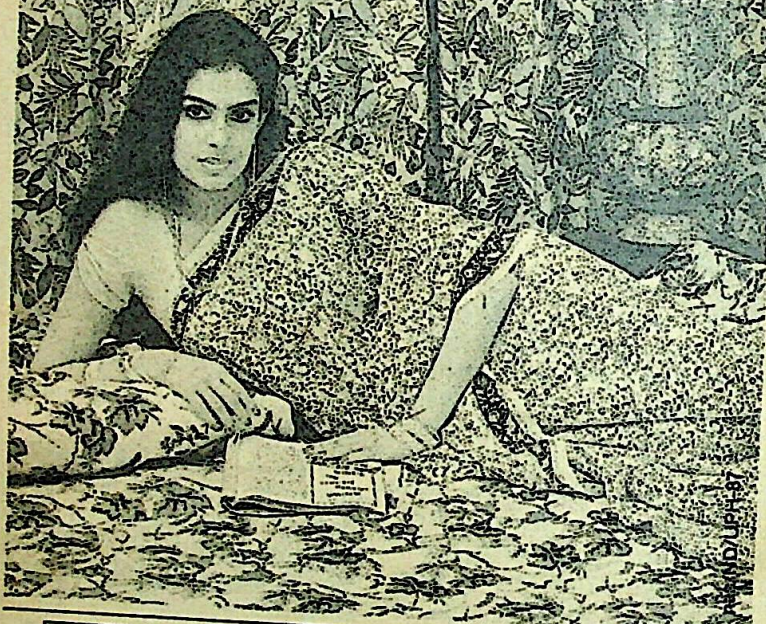
prison for about sixteen years, and India, in Ghaffar Khan's own words, threw him to the wolves after freedom.

Ghaffar Khan wrought a miracle by converting the violent Pathans into soldiers of non-violence. Fierce, militant men of the frontier practised non-violence in a remarkable way and it greatly gladdened Gandhiji's heart. Ghaffar Khan's was not the conquest of arms, but the triumph of the spirit of man. Gandhiji, after a visit to NWFP in 1938, wrote:

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"He is unquestionably a man of God. He believes in His living presence and knows that his movement will prosper only if God wills it. Having put his whole soul into his cause he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to realise that there is no deliverance for the Pathan except through out-and-out acceptance of non-violence. He does not want to see his Pathan as a goonda of society. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. This he thinks can only be achieved through non-violence."

Ghaffar Khan was popularly known in India as Frontier Gandhi and his devoted Pathans called him Badshah Khan. He was a true son of God, whose devotion to his Master was expressed in his service to his fellowmen. The British and the Pakistanis tried to break his heroic spirit but they could not even bend him. He stood calm and erect in the face of his oppressors with infinite faith in God. Suffering and self-denial made him a hero and it will not be too much to say that a day will come when man will



scarce believe that such a one led us during our struggle for freedom.

He suffered so much that suffering had become a part of his faith and he was ever ready to forgive his tormentors because they knew not what they did. His spirit of self-denial had reached that stage of nobility when he wanted nothing for himself except opportunities to serve his fellowmen. He was a devout Muslim but had a genuine love for all religions, and he firmly believed in the brotherhood of man. For him Islam meant "submission to the will of God, serving him through service of his creatures irrespective of caste, creed or colour and striving ceaselessly for truth and justice."

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"Unique Friends"

Gandhi and Ghaffar Khan were unique friends and there was a divine touch in their friendship. It had gone beyond the limits of political comradeship. It was a case of the deep calling the deep. They deeply loved and admired each other. Ghaffar Khan had full faith in Gandhiji and almost always gave him unquestioned obedience in political matters. He once said, "Whenever a question of great pith and moment arises in Gandhiji's life and Gandhiji takes an important decision, I instinctively say to myself, this is the decision of one who has surrendered himself to God, and God never guideth ill. I have never found it easy to question his decision for he refers all his problems to God and always listens to His Commands. After all I have but one measure, and that is the measure of one's surrender to God."

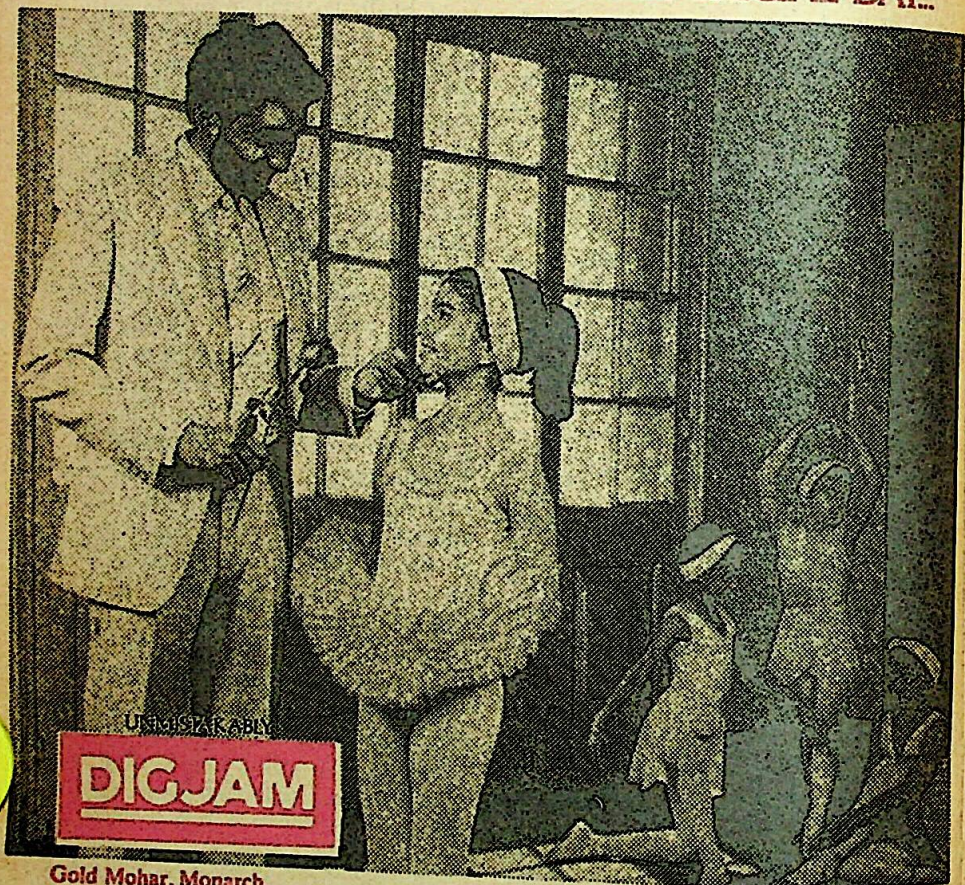
Ghaffar Khan was an embodiment of humility and nobility. Once I travelled with him for some distance and I repeatedly addressed him as Frontier Gandhi. He felt very embarrassed and said, "Bhai, must you load me with this heavy honour even when I feel the weight of it? Why can't you call me Ghaffar Khan, carry on the conversation in a

normal way and put me at ease?" I at once realized his innate modesty and embarrassment. We talked for about an hour in the moving train and his answers to my questions had a Biblical flavour about them.

Ghaffar Khan had several clashes with the Government, and was tortured many a time. After Gandhiji's Dandi march there was a great political upsurge in Peshawar. Ghaffar Khan and his brother, Khan Saheb were invited by the Commissioner of Peshawar to attend a special 'darbar', but both of them declined outright. This infuriated the authorities and the Khan brothers were arrested. Ghaffar Khan went to prison several times and once he was kept with criminals in jail and another time in a solitary cell. In one jail no fetters suited his height and weight and new ones were made specially for him. They were still tight in his body and certain portions above the ankles were injured and they bled. The Jail Superintendent's "consoling" reply was, "Slowly you will get used to them".

Ghaffar Khan was a man of rare courage. He was a dauntless soldier of India's freedom. He spent over 29 years in prison for steadfastly sticking to his prin-

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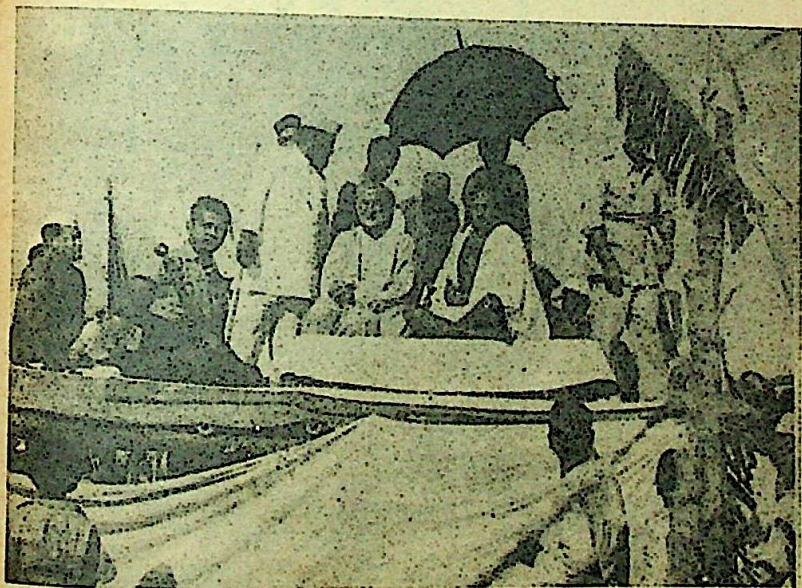
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ciples. Power-lust never gripped him. Office and position he always shunned. He was content to be a faithful soldier of the Mahatma, and a true servant of the people. Twice the presidency of the Congress was offered to him but he declined saying, "I am a soldier. I am not fit for this leader's role, for I have no talent for solving knotty political problems. I want to serve my people by living among them."

Partition of India brought many tragedies in its wake, and a big one was the continued incarceration of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In the history of our

freedom movement the name of this great Pathan will continue to shine with a lustre all its own. This was prophesied many years ago by Jawaharlal Nehru when he wrote, "When the history of the present days comes to be written only very few of those who occupy public attention now will perhaps find mention in it. But among those very few there will be the outstanding and commanding figure of Badshah Khan. Straight and simple, faithful and true, with a finely chiselled face that compels attention, and a character built up in the fire of long suffering and painful ordeal,



full of the hardness of the man of faith believing in his mission, and yet soft with the gentleness of one who loves his kind exceedingly."

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not only interested in the people of India and Pakistan, but he was concerned about the entire human race. He wanted man to be good and God-fearing. Till ninety and more he was active and

agile. He never compromised on principles. Even during his last visit to India he spoke in the same strain and in the same language as he did during the freedom struggle. When a reward of one lakh rupees was offered to him a few months ago he declined it. He was the greatest Gandhian after Gandhiji. His life was a poem in patriotism and a sermon in suffering and sacrifice. □ □ □

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The Voice of Badshah Khan

Study of Scriptures

"I read the Gita for the first time here (Peshawar) and also the Granth Saheb and the Bible. I thought that this was the least that I owed to my companions. I would not be able to understand them properly and to value their friendship, if I did not know their scriptures. I must admit, however, that I found that the Gita was then beyond me. I read it over and over, again. I had not then the intellectual equipment for it or perhaps the receptivity. It was Pandit Jagatram from the Andamans who really taught me the Gita in 1930. He had a passion for it and he made me enter into its spirit."

Service to Fellowmen is Service to God

"Among us prevailed family feuds, intrigues, enmities, evil customs, quarrels and riots. Whatever the Pakhtuns earned was squandered on harmful customs and practices and on litigations. Underfed and underclothed, Pakhtuns led a miserable life. Nor were we prosperous traders or good agriculturists. After prolonged exchange of views in September 1929, we succeeded in forming the 'Khudai Khidmatgar' organisation. We called it so, in order to fulfil a particular purpose; we wanted to infuse among the Pakhtuns the spirit and consciousness for the service of our community and country in the name of God. We were wanting in that spirit. The Pakhtuns believed in violence and that too not against aliens but their own brethren. The near and dear ones were the victims of violence. The intrigues and dissensions tore them asunder. Another great drawback was the spirit of vengeance

and lack of character and good habits among them.

"One who aspired to become a Khudai Khidmatgar declared on solemn oath: 'I am a Khudai Khidmatgar and as God needs no service I shall serve Him by serving His creatures selflessly. I shall never use violence, I shall not retaliate or take revenge. And I shall forgive anyone who indulges in oppression and excesses against me. I shall not be a party to any intrigue, family feuds and enmity, and I shall treat every Pakhtun as my brother and comrade. I shall give up evil customs and practices. I shall lead a simple life, do good and refrain from wrongdoing. I shall develop good character and cultivate good habits. I shall not lead an idle life. I shall expect no reward for my services. I shall be fearless and be prepared for any sacrifice.'

Working For The Nation

"My Muslim brothers, I am not a leader and neither I wish that you should cry 'Jai' for me. I am a soldier. I am not dependent on any one. God has given me money; I eat my bread to work for the nation." (in 1931).

The Teaching of Islam

What did Islam come into this world



BHAVAN'S JOURNAL.

for? To help the afflicted, the downtrodden, to bring food and clothes to the needy. Have we followed this teaching of Islam? The English rule over us. They need no help from you. They are not downtrodden. Yet we have been only too eager to stand by the Government and have woefully neglected our duty towards our own brethren, the Hindus, whom we have allowed to carry on the fight for liberty almost single-handed. This is the very negation of the teaching of Islam which asks us always to side with the weaker party. Muslims are bound by their faith to assist in every just campaign of liberty. And indeed, we ought to be the torch-bearers in the country's struggle for independence. A lesser-position is inconsistent with our traditions and the teachings of our religion. (in 1931).

Non-Violence for the Brave

"Mahatmaji, this land, so rich in fruit and grain, might well have been a smiling little Eden upon this earth, but it has today fallen under a blight. My conviction is daily growing deeper that more than anything else, violence has been the real bane of us Pathans in this province. It shattered our solidarity and tore us with wretched internal feuds. The entire strength, of the Pathan is today spent in thinking how to cut the throat of his brother. To what fruitful use this energy might not be put if only we could be rid of this curse!

"Whatever may be the case with the other provinces, I am firmly convinced that as far as the Frontier Province is concerned, the non-violent movement is the greatest boon that God has sent us. There is no other way of salvation for the Pathans except through non-violence. I say this from experience of the miraculous transformation that even the little measure of non-violence that we

have attained has wrought in our midst.

"We used to be so timid and indolent. The sight of an Englishman would frighten us. We thought nothing of wasting our time in idleness. Your movement has instilled fresh life into us and made us more industrious, so that a piece of land that formerly used to yield hardly ten rupees worth of produce, now produces double that amount. We have shed our fear and are no longer afraid of an Englishman or, for the matter of that, any man."

The Abomination of Slavery

"I am a Khudai Khidmatgar, and service of God for me is service of humanity. Islam teaches me that and I have endeavoured to follow that noble teaching by trying to serve all people. Neither religion nor anything else that is good can flourish in slavery. Therefore, the freedom of India is essential for me and that means the freedom and well-being of all who live in this country. It seems obvious to me that freedom can only flourish in India on a basis of amity and co-operation of all the different communities. I have worked to this end and shall continue to do so. It is not through hatred and ill-will that India or any community in India will prosper." (1945).

Friendship With All

"I regard non-violence as love and violence as hate. I have ever been a law-abiding citizen, and so I want that our country, Pakistan, too should be a peace-loving country and play a peaceful role in international affairs. I want that we should have friendly relations with all the countries of the world, whether they belong to this block or that block, to the East or the West. And in particular, we must definitely have friendly relations with our neighbours, and if there be any disputes, they must be settled by friendly negotiations and agreement." (1954).

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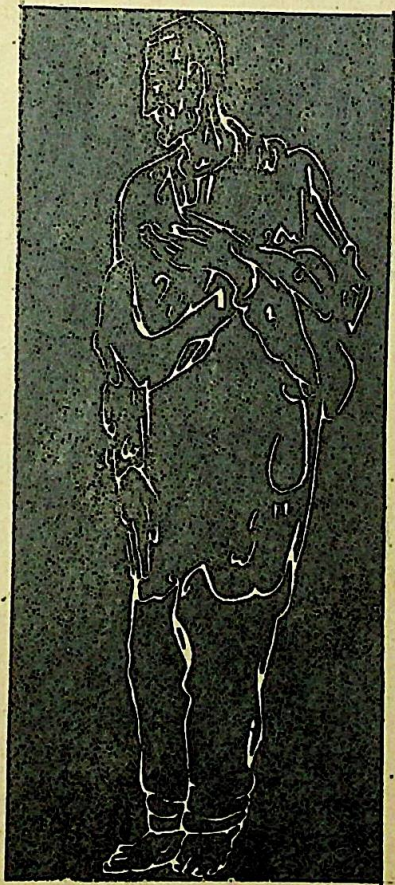
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A Meeting With Badshah Khan in Kabul

Prof. V. Rajaraman, a resident of Bombay, feelingly recalls a meeting he had with Badshah Khan in Kabul in 1972.

The year was 1972. I have vivid memories of the meeting I had with Badshah Khan in Kabul. I was no VIP, not a journalist and yet Badshah Khan had spared me some time. I was then working as a lecturer at the Kabul University and I was thrilled at the prospect of meeting so great a man who was comparable only to Mahatma Gandhi.

It was a Friday morning in the wintry month of September. The wind that was blowing across the valley was piercing, literally cutting into my veins. Badshah Khan was to arrive from Jalalabad and our meeting was to be at the house of my colleague at the university, Farooq Barbakezai. I wondered whether Badshah Khan would hazard a long journey by road in such an inclement weather — few men in their eighties would! But Badshah Khan arrived at the appointed time. He showed no signs of fatigue and walked straight into the room where I was waiting for him. Soon he asked a maid-servant to



bring us Afghan 'chai' — black tea.

Badshah Khan, then in his late eighties, was a picture of health. He was tall, imposing in his loose flowing dress and spoke in a clear and firm voice. Age sat on his shoulders with serenity and his face wore an ingenuous smile behind his keen and eager eyes. The smile that flickered on his lips lighted up his face and I felt that I was in the presence of a man who lived by the light of the soul.

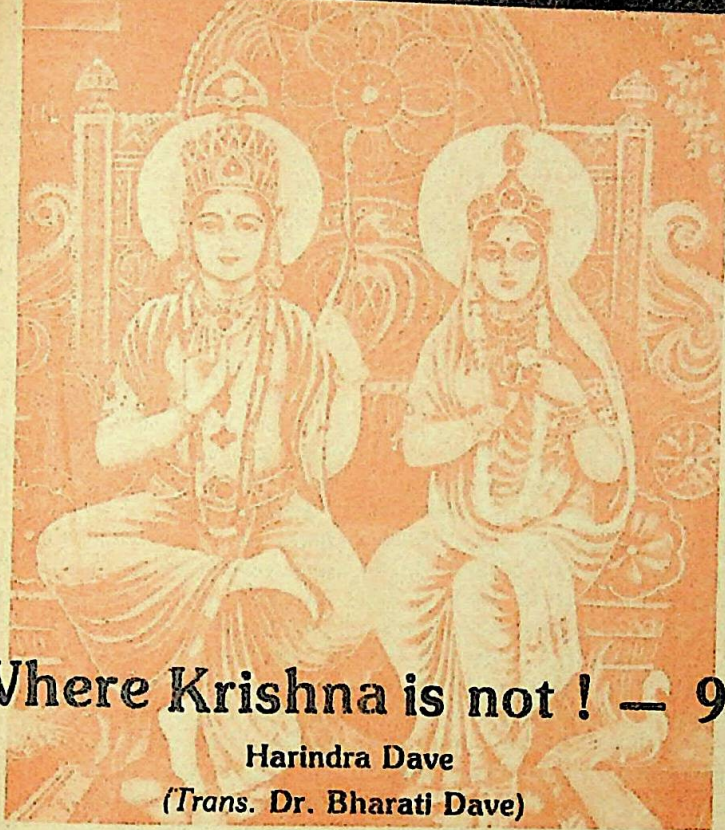
After exchanging a few pleasantries he asked me how I liked teaching at the Kabul University and if I were comfortable in Kabul. I was touched by his concern for me. He treated me as though I was an important guest — perhaps true greatness does not distinguish between man and man.

Soon Badshah Khan fell into a mood of reverie. He reminisced about his association with Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Nehru, Abdul Kalam Azad, Rajaji and Jaya Prakash Narain, spoke of his passion for India and

expressed great distress over the erosion of values in Indian public life. He spoke as Mahatma Gandhi would have done with feeling and remorse at what was happening in India. "India will live," he said, "only so long as the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi lives."

It was then nearly noon and Badshah Khan said that he would have to go to the mosque for his prayers. But those thirty minutes that I spent with him was like being in the presence of an ancient sage. I got up from my chair and asked if I could have a photograph taken with him. Badshah Khan gesticulated in a rather disturbed manner and said, "No." He added that I might publish this picture in some daily in India and give his observations undue publicity. I pleaded for a photograph but Badshah Khan did not oblige. It was now time to leave and Badshah Khan walked with me to the compound gate — a touching gesture to an ordinary Indian admirer. It is only "small acts" and "light occasions", as Plutarch points out, that bring out the essential man.





Where Krishna is not ! — 9

Harindra Dave

(Trans. Dr. Bharati Dave)

NARADA bent down and taking the dust from the ground of Vraj, touched it to his eyes and then to his heart. With his eyes closed he was remembering the happenings of the past few days and every second that he had stayed in the holy surroundings. Something was telling him. "Don't go away..."

Narada's shadow in the waters of Yamuna vibrated as if taunting him. 'So you have forgotten what

you had said when you came here: that Krishna is only here; that I will search for him only here? Now that you are going away, where will you find your beloved?'

Narada could not bear this taunt. He became very restless and in his restlessness without his knowledge, his fingers touched the strings of his Bina — and the harsh sound that came out of it seemed to be the scream of the

whole atmosphere of the Vraj.

Narada's legs did not want to leave the place. During his stay here with Nanda and Yashoda, he had come very near to Krishna. He could not believe that Krishna could be anywhere else except in the heart of Radha. The people of Vraj, were so much full of the love of Krishna that to take leave of them was a very difficult task for him.

When the people of Vraj came to know that Narada was to leave them, the pain and sorrow in their eyes deepened, they did not say anything but became more silent; Narada could not bear the weight of their sorrowful silence.

The people of Vraj and the land of Vraj were now getting accustomed to sudden calamities.

One day Akrur had come and taken away Balram and Krishna.

Then came Uddhav.

He came with many a soothing advice and when he went away, he took with him a butter vessel given by Yashoda Ma and a flute given by Radha....

Once again the people of Vraj felt that Krishna was going away along with Uddhav.

Now, when after a long stay in Vraj, Narada started talking of going away, Narada, whose playing of Bina had a soothing effect on the people of Vraj, it was one more calamity for them.

Everybody in Vraj had cried when Krishna had left. They had cried and they had run after the chariot.

When Uddhav went, nobody cried but all had become silent.

But when they heard that Narada also was leaving, they neither could cry nor remain silent; they became so much depressed and pained that the sadness was more oppressive than any unabashed weeping or stony silence.

Nanda said, "Narada, you must be wondering about the lack of civility of the people of Vraj who are not prevailing upon you to stay back here.."

Narada was amazed and got unsettled by Nanda's question as that was precisely what he was feeling. Before Narada could reply, Nanda said further, "Devarshi, it is our good fortune that a guest like you has been staying amongst us. When Krishna went away, he took away the spring with him and what is now left with us is nothing but a dry garden; and for our own selfish purpose, just to share our unfortunate plight, how can we ask anybody to stay with us, least of all you?

Narada melted with pity on listening to what Nanda said. He said, "Nanda, sometimes I feel I must stay here. But I have to meet



Krishna somewhere on this earth as I have many things to discuss with him regarding people of the earth. If only I can meet him once, some way will be shown to me for the uplift of the suffering mankind..."

Nanda said, "Every particle of dust of this Vraj is anxious to meet him. But don't tell him when you meet him that we all are pining for him so much."

"Why so?" Narada, who was taken by surprise, asked.

"Devarshi," Nanda said, "fate has played a treacherous game with me. Overnight, my own son became somebody else's son. I now understand the significance of it all. That is why the pain of separation is there but I have no complaint. Today, I know that the evil-minded kings like Jarasandh are out to destroy the whole of Aryavarta and Krishna

has once again to lift the Govardhan mountain; but the people to be served are not a handful of cowherds but the whole of Aryavarta. And so the responsibility of Krishna is much more than what it was when he was here. Under the circumstances, if you will tell him about us and our sufferings, he would be pained and may become emotionally overwrought. I do not want this to happen. I do not want him to fail in his duty towards mankind,"

They had reached the outskirts of Vrindavan, where Nanda stopped. Now Narada had to go his own way, leaving Nanda and Vraj. Once again Narada took the dust from the ground and with it touched his head. Then he said, "Nanda, this dust that I am putting on my forehead not because Krishna had trod on this ground, but because this dust has become pure and holy because of the tears of Nanda, Yashoda and Radha, and it will remain sacred for years on end..."

With these words, Narada set out on the road to Mathura. He had no courage to look back at the painfully thirsty eyes of Nanda. He went on walking with a heavy heart on the road which was wet with the tears of affection.

Narada would have gone on walking had he not encountered a bright youth, who stopped him on the road, prostrated and said, "Devarshi, please accept my Pranams."

"Be happy and may God bless you my child..." said Narada.

"Devarshi, the day is almost coming to an end and after performing the evening prayers, I request you to come with me and have your meals with us," said the boy in a very soft, gentle voice.

Narada looked at the youth. His face was bright and serene. His shining black hair and glittering eyes reminded him of someone he knew.

"Who are you, my child?" asked Narada.

"Devarshi, I am Angaraj Karna, a friend of prince Suyodhan. My master Suyodhan will be very happy to meet you," said Karna.

"Suyodhan — son of Dhritarashtra?" Narada asked. "How is it that you are here?"

"Devarshi, it seems you do not know what is happening in Aryavarta," Karna said in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, I am not aware of the happenings, as I was in Vraj all this time," said Narada.

"In Vraj?" Karna blushed a little then said, "You must have gone on a pilgrimage..."

"Angaraj, in the whole world there is no holier place than Vraj; but then, it is a matter of faith. Which pilgrim centre do you go to?" Narada asked.

"Our pilgrimage is also related to Krishna," said Karna.

"Are you going to Mathura?" Narada asked in wonder.

"No, along with our army, we are supposed to meet the King of kings Jarasandh, four kilometers away from Mathura. The army has proceeded via the main road while we have taken a short-cut. We are to talk and plan some strategy with the king," said Karna.

"Army, strategy, four kilometers away from Mathura... what are you getting ready for Angaraj?"

"King Jarasandh has decided to kill all the Yadavas as his daughters became widowed on account of one of them. Mathura, the golden city, built by Kamsa, will now be captured and looted by his father-in-law," said Karna.

"Who is it Karna? Has Devarshi Narada come?" asked a very sweet voice from within the tent and a very handsome young man came out, prostrated to Narada and said, "Devarshi, you be our guest today..."

"Maharaj Suyodhan, some day

I will come to Hastinapur and be your guest. At present I am in a hurry. Before the sun sets, I want to reach Mathura."

"I can understand your anxiety to reach Mathura before it is destroyed by the enemies. I am also anxious to see that beautiful golden city, but I am helpless, I cannot go there...", Karna said.

"Angaraj, when I meet Krishna, I shall explain to him your helplessness..." said Narada.

Karna was startled but he at once collected himself; then he said, "You also tell him about my strength and power, so that in the politics of Hastinapur, he can decide as to which side he should support..."

"Yes Devarshi", said Suyodhan, "when you go to Mathura you may better tell Krishna that while fighting Jarasandh, he will have also to face Suyodhan and Angaraj Karna."

"Yuvaraj, once again you politicians — kings — have planned the game in which the people of Aryavarta, their religion and tradition will all be at stake. It pains me to think that the career of two young, capable warriors should begin in this polluted atmosphere," Narada said with a sigh.

"Are you talking about us,

Devarshi? We are born in this polluted soil. I was born of a blind father. Though I am the eldest of the children, it was Dharmaputra who was given the status of crown prince and not me. Recently, your Krishna had sent Akrur to Hastinapur just to find out whether his aunt's sons Pandavas were given their due or not. To keep the Pandavas invincible and to keep up their image of bravery, they cut the right hand thumb of Eklavya. And if I had not rushed to the aid of Karna, his plight also would have been no different," said Suyodhana.

"May God give you good thoughts and bless you. If you will fight for justice — Dharma — you will be victorious," said Narada. "I would have liked to stay with you this afternoon, but I have to reach Mathura before nightfall. May your journey bring good."

Prince Suyodhana and Karna prostrated Devarshi Narada. Karna said, "Devarshi, please forgive us if we have offended you in our excitement."

Narada proceeded further, thinking about the whole situation. He could not understand on which side the truth was. It was certainly true that in a way injustice had been done to Dhritarashtra when the kingdom

was given to Pandu and besides, all the friends of Pandavas showed enmity towards Duryodhan. Under these circumstances Duryodhan was inclined to take recourse to deceit. There was enmity between Kurus and Panchals. There was now enmity between Yadavas and Magadhis, and Kurus were taking side of Magadh. There was not a single city in Aryavarta which was not scorched by the flames of enmity. Narada thought: 'When Dharma, religion, tradition, humanity everything is affected, what will Krishna do? How will that delicate child be able to fight these kings and warriors all alone?'

Narada eventually reached the outskirts of Mathura and immersed as he was in deep thought, he did not realise that he had reached the very doors of the fort. They were closed and Narada understood that preparations for war were going on.

The guard at the door recognised Narada and opened for him a small window. Inside Mathura, the army men were busy polishing and sharpening their weapons. Some were busy playing with one another with their weapons. All were so busy that none took notice of Narada.

Narada gathered all news while travelling along the roads of Mathura: how many armies

would be coming to the rescue of Yadavas, and how many to the rescue of Jarasandh. It seemed everyone knew these things by heart. Some people believed that Balram and Krishna would perform a miracle and that Jarasandh with his huge army would be overpowered in no time. Some people were blaming Balram and Krishna saying that because Krishna had killed Kamsa, everybody in Mathura and the whole of Aryavarta had come to trouble. Had he not killed him, life would have been happy as usual.

On the road, Narada saw Yuyudhan going hurriedly. Seeing Narada, though he was in a hurry, Yuyudhan stopped and after bowing before him asked, "Devarshi, why are you here?"

"I have come to meet Krishna," said Narada.

"Then you had better come with me..." said Yuyudhan. "I am going to the assembly at which Balram and other Yadavas will be present for discussion. Uddhav has urgently called me and I am going there."

They both hurried and entered the main gate of the assembly hall. All around guards had lined up. Seeing Yuyudhan and Narada, the guards saluted them and made way for them to enter.

But the doors to the discussion

room were closed. Yuyudhan restlessly waited but Narada who was calm closed his eyes and stood praying. The doors would now open, and he would be able to see his God, Krishna, he thought. The God for whom he had pined so ardently in Vraj, would now be seen any moment and this thought gladdened his heart and brought tears to his eyes. At the same time he could not guess in what state of mind Krishna would be with all the gloom of such a destructive war in the immediate future...

Yuyudhan became very restless and was moving up and down with heavy steps. He asked one minister, "Who are all there inside?"

"Krishna, Balram, King Ugrasen, Vasudev, Akrur, Satrajit and others..." said the minister.

Narada heard only Krishna's name and the vision of Krishna that was in Narada's heart seemed to pervade the whole atmosphere.

The door opened with a noise...

Both Yuyudhan and Narada were startled by the noise. Though the door opened, for some time nobody could be seen inside the room. At last Uddhav came out, and Yuyudhan rushed towards him, but Uddhav saw

Narada and giving a smile to Yuyudhan, came forward and prostrated before Narada.

"Uddhav, today my ambition of meeting Krishna will be fulfilled", said Narada.

Seeing the tears in the worried eyes of Uddhav, Narada became restless and his mind was filled with doubts and fear.

"Devarshi", Uddhav was unable to speak any further.... He had not expected Devarshi Narada there and under those circumstances.

Looking at the stunned expression on Uddhav's face, Narada asked, "What is the matter Uddhav? Why are you so perturbed?"

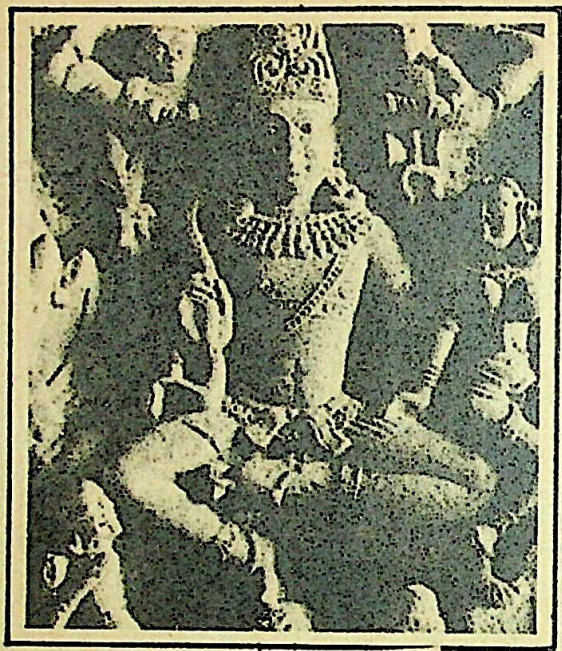
"Devarshi," he said regaining his voice. "Krishna and Balram..."

"I know Uddhav, they are busy with important discussions. Yuyudhan has told me about that. I am not in a hurry to meet him, perhaps at night or tomorrow morning..."

"No Devarshi... No... you cannot meet Krishna, they are not here...", said Uddhav. Uddhav knew how much intensely Narada wanted to meet Krishna and that was why he was so afraid to break the news...

"What are you saying, Uddhav?"

"Yes, Devarshi. Today at the



meeting he said that it was with him and Balram that Jarasandh had enmity. If they left Mathura then Jarasandh, instead of fighting and destroying Mathura, would follow them..."

"Oh, but at present they are there in the discussion room, aren't they?" asked Narada anxiously.

"No," Uddhav said, and before continuing further, he looked around and made sure no one was listening, and then said, "from the discussion room Krishna and Balram have gone out of Mathura through a secret

tunnel. It is more than half an hour since they left and a chariot was kept ready at the other end of the tunnel. Now they must be on their way to the Pravarshana Mountain going at a great speed..."

Hearing this, Narada felt giddy. King Ugrasen, Vasudev and others came out of the room and prostrated before Narada but his mind was with the chariot that was taking Krishna away from Mathura; and Uddhav's words were ringing again and again in his mind...

"Krishna is not here, Krishna is not here..."

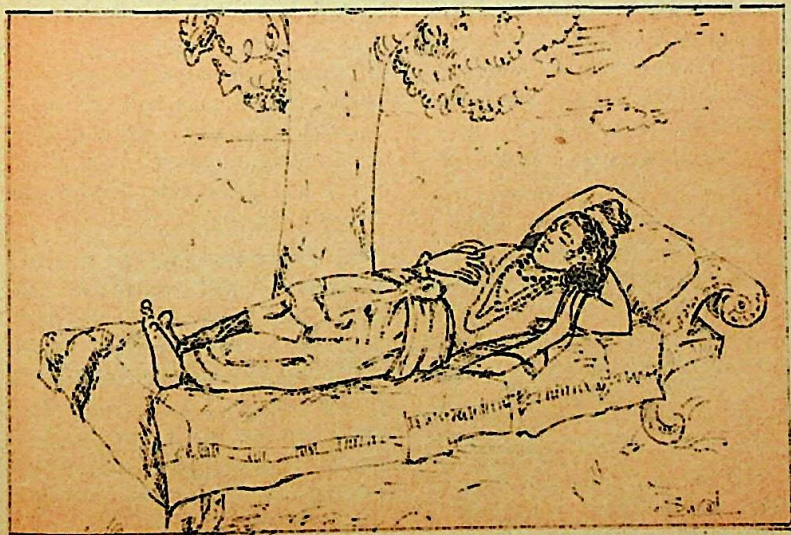
YOUR HEALTH — 67

FATIGUE

Dr. K. Narayanan

THE complaint of weakness — fatigue — is all too common. No patient who visits the doctor fails to include it in the repertory of symptoms. Lassitude that accompanies organic diseases is understandable. But there are times when one feels extreme lethargy without any ap-

parent organic cause. After a day's strenuous labour — physical or mental — one may feel as if the entire energy from the body has been drained off. This naturally goads one to take rest or go to sleep and when he regains the composure, he feels whole again, with the body and mind



replenished with energy and freshness.

The fatigue that follows hard work is often taken for granted. Nobody takes it seriously, though they may not be aware of the physical or chemical mechanism that brings about this ebb and flow of energy in the body. But there are times when people experience fatigue without having the power to trace it to any obvious source. Tonics, vitamins and "gland shots" are often resorted to pep up the sagging energy.

The true cause of fatigue is difficult to assess; so is also the degree of fatigue. For no two human beings have the same energy resources and, moreover, the capacities of individuals vary from day to day. However, medical science has distinguished three main categories of fatigue:

1. Pathological. Here the fatigue is an early warning symptom or a consequence of a mild or serious organic disorder. The fatigue is as obvious as in the case of common cold as it is in the case of cancer. Of course in these cases, other symptoms are always present that suggest the true cause. However, if one feels of having the body drained of energy for weeks on end, even if there is no other symptom a

thorough physical check-up is necessary.

2. Physical. This is often due to overworked muscles. The chemical reactions in the blood leave waste products — carbon dioxide and lactic acid — to accumulate in the blood and this in turn, leave the muscles of otherwise healthy people exhausted by sapping up the strength. (It has been found that the blood of a fatigued animal when injected into a rested animal can produce fatigue). However this type of fatigue, as noted earlier, usually brings on a pleasant sort of tiredness which often vanishes with rest. Ironically, in today's world where labour-saving gadgets have led to leisure, people became afflicted with tiredness more often by less exertion than as a result of over-activity. If this is discerned to be the cause, increased physical activity can often help restore the sagging energy.

3. Psychological. This arises from prolonged emotional problems and conflicts, particularly depression and anxiety. When certain of our feelings are not expressed openly, they often come out in the form of various physical symptoms, of which fatigue is the most common manifestation.

Needless to say, in the great majority of cases fatigue is induced by psychological causes. Most often it can be found that the fatigue runs in a definite pattern in each individual. During a certain time of the day, certain thoughts or certain work fills us with energy while the same pattern occurs in the case of fatigue as well. The duration of fatigue can also be seen to run a similar course. Once we realise this fatigue pattern, we can do much to re-arrange the pattern to conserve the energy that goes waste otherwise.

Strangely, most often people find it difficult to recognise the cause of their depression or fatigue. The reason is not far to seek. The cause, for example, may spring from some underlying mental conflicts. The tedium of caring for a home and small children, preparing meals and no one interesting to talk to can unleash fatigue in a house wife, just as gnawing resentments, envy and feelings of guilt. Such emotionally - induced fatigue can be compounded by sleeplessness which leaves the victim to stretch and yawn with exhaustion.

Let us now consider some general facts about fatigue.

★ Fatigue, though a trouble maker, is a protective reaction

against stress. It warns that the body and mind are strained beyond the capacity, a warning that has to be heeded in order to prevent a complete break-down.

★ Emotional frustration, laziness, fear and boredom can frequently masquerade as fatigue. (There were even geniuses who, when faced with work, experienced fits of trembling, fatigue and coldness of limbs!)

★ The fuel that supplies the body with its energy is dependent on the body reserves of oxygen and blood sugar. At rest, the oxygen consumption is less (say, a cupful a minute). At work the load increases (as high as 6½ gallons a minute). When these energy-giving materials become depleted, muscles starve and stall. To keep fatigue at bay, the supply and demand of these elements — blood-sugar and oxygen — should be kept in balance.

★ Mental performance and physical stamina are co-related. When one of them gives away, the other falls off too.

★ The brain and nerves are especially sensitive to lack of sugar and oxygen. Though only 2% of the body weight, the brain requires 14% of the total blood flow and uses 23% of the entire

oxygen intake. Its sugar consumption, too, is large. Though the exact nature of the massive fuel consumption is not known, it is generally understood that it converts the chemical energy of oxygen and sugar into electrical brain waves and nerve impulses. When the fuel supply is reduced, brain-lag and, concomitantly, physical feeling of tiredness result. When the fuel supply falls far below, the brain goes into a state of coma — with the possible consequence of irreparable damage to brain cells. Thus physical tiredness should be treated as flashes of red lights to slow down our activities — and take rest.

★ The adrenalin hormones, secreted by adrenal glands, can mobilize massive energy during emotions like anger or fear. But once the effect wears off, it leads to chronic fatigue.

★ Besides overwork and prolonged emotional strain, salt deficiency (from excessive sweating, diarrhoea, low-sodium diet etc.), malnutrition, rigid dieting for weight reduction, sleeplessness, etc. can result in fatigue.

★ Caffein, tea, pep pills and other stimulants can postpone fatigue but can never prevent it. In fact, in excess they are habit-forming and counter-productive.

They depress the appetite and invite other undesirable effects, like headache, dizziness and insomnia.

★ The case is the same with alcohol and nicotine in tobacco.

★ Persons of overweight tend to get exhausted more quickly than people with normal weight.

★ Fatigue can be induced by **fear of failure in the career or certain undertaking**. This is particularly so in people with achievements to their credit. Past glory and pride are no guarantee to fight against fatigue in many people!

The following simple steps can be tried to ward off fatigue in our day-to-day life.

★ Instead of taking large meals at longer intervals, have frequent snacks. The diet should be high in protein and low in sugar. Frequent eating of sweets to "pick-up" energy (by increasing blood-sugar!) is very similar to pep pills. It lets down lower than before, when the effects wear off. Regular, well-balanced meals is the answer to fatigue.

★ Shed extra weight.

★ Regular, daily exercises — and not the type of exercises done at weekends or once in a while. Regular exercises — such as swimming, walking, jogging, etc.

— increase the energy than sap it. Such regular exercises have a relaxing, tranquillizing effect. They can promote better sleep.

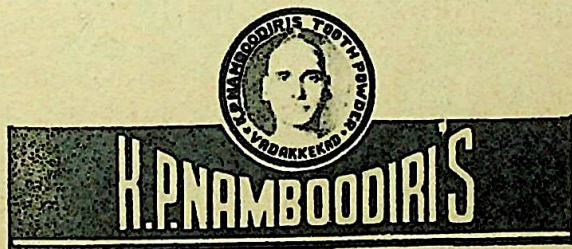
★ Good sleep, of course, is the most essential factor in warding off fatigue. Make sure you get tiredness not **because** of insomnia. Avoid using sleeping pills to induce sleep, as a regular habit.

★ Each individual possesses an energy cycle, which varies from individual to individual. One should try to schedule the most taxing job for the time of the day when the energy is at the peak; the less taxing ones when the energy demand is less. Also, change the pace of work. If too

tired to think clearly, or the muscle is too tired, stop the work for a while to walk about a bit, listen to music or just think of pleasant things.

★ If the apparent cause is not traceable to common sense, medical examination should be resorted to. It can be due to anaemia, high or low contents of sugar in the blood, or other glandular deficiencies. At the outset, fatigue is not that bad as usually people think. It never alters our capacities. It only diminishes them for a while. It is a good signal which should be recognized and rectified — before damage sets in.

SIXTY TWO YEARS OF DENTAL PROTECTION



DHANTADHAVANACHOORNAM

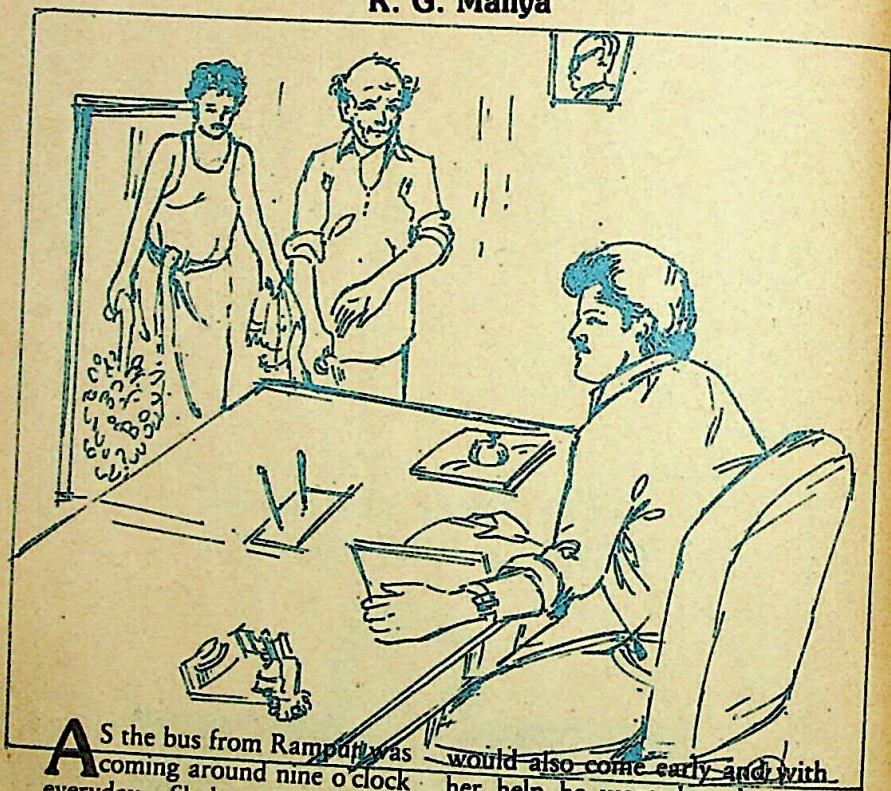
AYURVEDIC TOOTH POWDER

VADAKKEKAD, TRICHUR Dt. KERALA
PHONE: 223, PUNNAYOORKULAM

WANTED STOCKISTS — CONTACT

We, The Bankers — 10

K. G. Mallya



As the bus from Rampur was coming around nine o'clock everyday, Shakuntala used to come to office very early but the next day, even though the office had started at 10.30 a. m. she was not to be seen. Poor Vaman Rao ! He had come to the office earlier than usual, hoping that Shakuntala would also come early and with her help he wanted to keep at least a few Passbooks ready — if not all — so that both the old man from the village and the Manager would be pleased. This, he thought, was the best way to make amends for all that had happened the previous evening and also to get a pat from the

boss. But all his plans had gone awry as Shakuntala did not turn up in time.

Moment by moment Rao grew restless and every now and then he began looking at the clock and then at the main entrance. The "tick-rock" sound of the clock became unbearable. He felt as if somebody was striking at his head with a hammer. Drops of perspiration started appearing on his forehead and he nervously looked at the Manager's cabin. He could see the Manager seated — calm, composed and undisturbed. There was no trace of anger, anxiety and animosity and his face was fully reassuring, exuding the glow of goodwill.

Rao wiped the perspiration and again looked at the office clock. The clock seemed to be merciless, caring little for anybody's feelings. It bluntly showed quarter to eleven and Rao stood up restlessly. "Why this girl has not come so far?" He thought of reporting her absence. Before he could put a step forward he saw Shakuntala with a bag in her hand hurriedly entering, wiping the sweat with her handkerchief.

She entered the Manager's cabin and wished, "Good morning, sir. I am sorry, I am late. The bus had a breakdown on the way and it took some time for them to

repair it."

Pandey looked up and said, "Does not matter. Sometimes it happens."

Shakuntala now asked. "Sir, has he come?"

"Who?"

"The gentleman who opened 30 accounts?"

"No. — Why?"

Hearing that Shakuntala heaved a sigh of relief and she slowly said, "Rao sab had said he will be coming sharp at 10.30 a. m. and I was anxious to reach before that time."

Being unable to follow what she was saying, Pandey silently looked at her face, puzzled. Shakuntala kept her bag on the table and to Pandey's astonishment took out 30 passbooks and Account Opening Forms.

She, then, innocently said, "Sir, here are the 30 Passbooks. I had taken the forms and new Passbooks home and have brought them back completed." She kept the books neatly on the table in three rows and looked at Pandey as though nothing had happened. It was an incredible sight. Unbelieving, Pandey became speechless. He was deeply moved.

Shakuntala again said, "I am sorry, sir. I have come late!"

Pandey had no words to express his appreciation and hap-

piness. He wanted to tell something and his tongue rolled but no words could be formed. He simply said, "Does not matter ! Does not matter !"

"Can I give these books to Rao, sab, sir?" Shakuntala sought his permission.

"No ! Let them be here. You can go now," Pandey said.

As she left the cabin, Pandey pressed the callbell and as usual Hasmukh appeared promptly. Pandey asked him to call Rao and very soon Rao came in.

Standing in front of the Manager, Rao asked: "Sir, did you call me?" He could see the rows of Passbooks on the Manager's table. With eyes wide open, he stood gazing at them dumbfounded.

Pandey smiled at him jubilantly. He softly touched all the three rows of the Passbooks and then looking up at Rao said, "Rao, here you are! Shakuntala had taken the blank Passbooks home and has brought them back completed: You told me yesterday that she was irresponsible."

Rao surrendered, "Sir, I am sorry. This is really incredible and beyond my comprehension. Poor thing! She must have spent the whole night writing the Passbooks. She is really great!" He admitted unreservedly.

Pandey advised. "From the

very beginning I had told you not to go by mere appearance!"

Rao repented, "You are right, sir."

By then ushering in the old agriculturist, Laxman entered the Manager's cabin, followed by two servants. The old man was wearing a colourful dress as if it was a festival: red turban, black coat over an yellow shirt and a white dhoti.

On seeing him Pandey stood up hurriedly. Joining his palms he said, "Namaste! Welcome! Please come in!"

Then turning to Rao, he said, "Rao, this is the gentleman who has blessed us by opening 30 accounts!" Hearing this Pyarelal proudly stroked his moustache and sat down. The servants stood behind the old man. Laxman went back to his seat. Not knowing how to begin the conversation Pandey said, "These are your Passbooks. I will sign them and give you."

"There is no hurry!" The old man stroked his moustache. "First of all, I would like to see what a bank is."

"Certainly. It is our pleasure!" Pandey smiled, "But before that, what would you like to have — tea or coffee?"

Astounded Pyarelal asked, "Do you have a hotel here?"

"Oh, no! We prepare tea or

coffee for ourselves and our honourable guests like you!" replied Pandey, grinning.

"Well, we will have tea, then. Let's see how the people in the bank prepare tea."

Rao called out, "Hasmukh! Hasmukh!"

Hasmukh instantly appeared, saying, "Yes, sir!"

Rao ordered, "Prepare six cups of tea. Take this money for milk." He mechanically took out a five-rupee note from his pocket and offered. Hasmukh went out with the money. Pyarelal stood up, looked around and like a child said, "Hmmm..... so this is a bank."

Amused, Pandey volunteered, "I will show you every bit of the Bank. We shall go round for a while." He came out of the cabin followed by the old man, Rao and the servants.

Along with Rao, Pandey first led him to the strong room. In the strong room, Pandey, pointing to the safe, said, "This is the treasury in which we keep cash and other valuables. See how thick its walls are! Nobody can break it open. Even fire or floods cannot destroy it".

Pyarelal exclaimed, "Oh, yes!"

Pandey continued to explain, "It cannot be opened without the knowledge of two persons. It has two keys. One is with our ac-

countant Rao and the other one is with me." Turning to Rao he said, "Rao, please insert your key."

Rao came forward, inserted his key and then Pandey put in his. Thereafter he opened the safe to show bundled currency notes stacked very neatly inside. Staring at the currency notes for a while, Pyarelal opined. "This is really a very safe place to keep money!"

Nodding his head, Pandey closed the door of the safe, locked it and explained, "Grandpa, you know this entire room is built of cement-concrete. This is a special construction. No burglars can break in. The front door also has double lock arrangement. The door can be opened only if two persons join and use the keys together."

Pyarelal nodded, "Hmmm.. Very safe place to keep money. Very safe indeed!" Encouraged by his words Pandey added, "In bigger cities we have lockers, which people can hire on rent. They can keep their valuables themselves, and there is no fear of thieves."

The old man was greatly impressed. They came out of the strong room and Pandey closing the room pointed at the robust door. In front of it Pyarelal stood

for a while, surveyed touched and then asked, "Show me the key!" Pandey showed a key of unusual size

Pyarelal measuring it with his fingers said, "Very long indeed! I am seeing such a giant key for the first time in my life!"

Pandey acknowledged with a hearty smile and then he suggested, "Shall we meet our staff now?"

"Yes. Certainly!" agreed the guest.

Next Pandey took him to the cashier. On seeing the cashier in the cabin, curiously the old man asked, "Why is this man kept in a cage here?"

Pandey smiled and replied, "He is not kept in the cage. He is our cashier who receives and pays cash on behalf of the Bank. For safety he sits in a cabin like this."

"Now I understand." Pyarelal asked, "What is your name, brother?"

With his usual stammering, Sinha replied, "V-a-k-p-a-t-i Sinha." Then Pandey introduced Shakuntala, "This is Shakuntala. It is she who wrote all your Passbooks last night."

The old man looked fixedly at her face for a while, remembered something and said, "I have seen this sister somewhere."

Smiling brightly, Shakuntala recalled, "Yes, grandpa, a few

years ago I had paid a visit to your village as a Gram Sevika."

Pyarelal remembered, "Yes. Yes. Now I remember. But why did you give up that job?"

Shakuntala smiled and said, "Less salary and more travel. In the Bank one can sit comfortably and work. There is also no need to travel."

Pyarelal asked, "Now tell me what work are you doing here?"

For that Shakuntala answered, "I am handling Savings Bank Department. You can open an account with five rupees and thereafter deposit when you have, and withdraw when you need. For each account we give a Passbook and to withdraw money, a cheque book."

"What is that cheque book?" The old man wanted to know.

Shakuntala took out a cheque book and showed the cheque leaves.

Pyarelal said, "You told this is for withdrawing money from the Bank."

"Yes."

"Then am I going to get a cheque book?"

"But to get a cheque book one must deposit at least Rs. 100/-"

"I see!" The old man laughed. By then Hasmukh came there and told the Manager in a whisper: "Sir, tea is ready."

Pandey asked Pyarelal, "Shall

"we have tea, first?"

Pyarelal said, "Please wait a little. Can you show me your account books?"

Pandey took the Current Account ledger and explained, "In books like this we keep the accounts. Whatever the clerks write, the Accountant will cross-check and thus accuracy is ensured in the Bank. Mistakes do happen but very rarely."

Pyarelal enquired, "Now tell me what our Laxman is doing."

"He is handling loans."

"Loans? Do people pay back the loans?"

"Why? Have you any doubt?"

"No doubt at all. Can you now tell me where is your byre?"

"Byre?"

"Yes. They say these days banks are financing people to buy buffaloes. I have heard that when the loans are not repaid, people from the Bank will take away the buffaloes and sell them. Till they are sold the animals have to be kept somewhere, you see!"

To Pandey it sounded like a great joke. He heartily laughed and said, "We have not had any such occasion and so we do not have byre or a cow-shed. In fact none of the banks have byres and somebody must have given you wrong information!"

Pyarelal smiled, "That is why I wanted to see the Bank for

myself. I am convinced now and let us go to your room!"

Hasmukh had kept the tea ready and they all drank it with relish. "Good tea!" Pyarelal openly admired and then looking at the Passbooks he remarked, "You keep big books for yourselves and give these small books to us. Why this selfishness?"

Pandey laughed and explained, "Small books are easy to carry. Just now you have seen those big books. If we give them to the customers will it not be difficult for them to carry?"

"That is also correct," the old man nodded his head.

"Now tell me, how do you like the visit to the Bank?" Pandey eagerly asked. Pyarelal looked round for a while and then declared frankly, "I am fully convinced that the money kept in the Bank is safe and you people are friendly, warm and sincere, deserving all encouragement. May God bless you!"

With these words he stood up and searched for something hidden in the inside pockets of his coat. Then, one by one, to everybody's amazement he pulled out six packets of Rs. 100/- each, altogether Rs. 60,000/- and smiling brightly he kept them on the Manager's table.

Unbelieving Pandey became dumb and Rao, motionless like a

statue. All the while Rao was feeling that the Manager was giving undue importance to the five rupee account holder but now! The royal treatment had brought the results quickly and fabulously.

With sincerity, innocence and simplicity still writ large on his face, Pyarelal said, "Put together, it is Rs. 60,000/-. You can keep at the rate of Rs. 2,000/- in each one of the 30 accounts and I hope now you people will be happy!"

Pandey was deeply moved. He knew not how to thank him. He handed over the cash to Rao and Rao went out. He said, "I have no words to express my gratitude. Really we are happy!"

"You came to my residence yesterday and sought our blessings. You are the first Manager to call on me...!"

Pandey again became speechless and he bowed down his head out of gratefulness.

"All these days nobody approached me and I was not knowing what a Bank is," Pyarelal frankly admitted.

"I am very happy!" Pandey raised his head."

"This place looks like our own home. People here are very cordial and warm. Well, you know that girl, Gram Sevika. She is very hard-working and good natured. Take care of the poor

girl and God will bless you in turn."

"Yes. I will. Even otherwise she is really a good girl." Without hesitation Pandey assured.

"Now shall I take your leave?" The old man stood up and asked.

"Please wait a little. We shall add today's credit in the Passbooks and give you now."

Pyarelal stroked his moustache and said lightly, "Don't worry. I have full faith in you. You can send the books leisurely through our Laxman." He rose to go.

"Thank you very much for coming down grandpa! Please bless us like this by your frequent visits." When Pandey said like this, Pyarelal waved his hand. Before taking leave he remembered something and said, "You need not send the books through Laxman. Tomorrow this man will come and collect them." Is that all right?" he asked pointing towards one of his servants.

"No problem!" so saying Pandey followed him up to the gate. When he returned to his cabin, Rao came in and said, "All this is totally unexpected..."

Interrupting, Pandey said in a jovial mood, "Yes, two surprises today! Yesterday you felt that Shakuntala was irresponsible and today she brought all the books duly entered! Again yesterday you thought that the old villager

had fooled us by opening 30 five-rupee accounts but today he has deposited Rs. 60,000/-".

There were no two opinions about these surprises and so Rao, with his anxiety now completely gone, said, "Sir, the old man seems to be very shrewd. He deposited his money only after being convinced that the Bank is a safe place to keep the money."

"Yes! You are right!" Agreed Pandey: "Even though many people in our country are illiterate or semi-literate, they are very practical and religious. Let us not take them for a ride because we are

educated. They are also equally intelligent. Let us not go by mere academic qualifications."

Rao said, "You are quite right sir."

Nodding his head Pandey revealed, "You know before leaving, that old man told me that Shakuntala is very hard working and good natured. Rao, let us not treat her harshly on any account!"

Rao repented and said, "Yes, sir! I am really sorry for all that nonsense I uttered against her yesterday." Ashamed, he hung his head down.

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Bhavan's NEWS

MUNSHI CENTENARY AND BHAVAN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

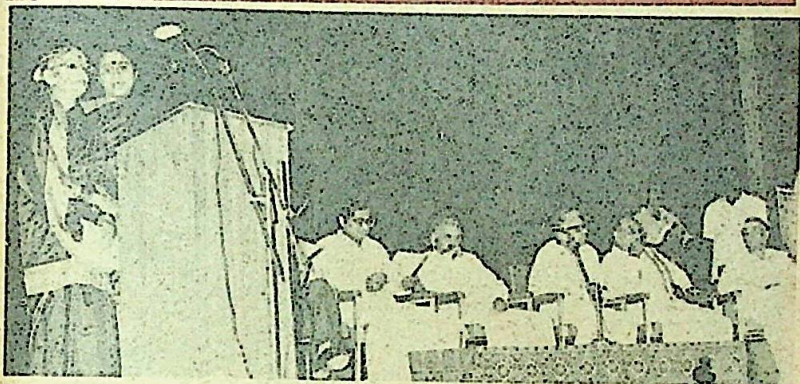
REPORTS of the twin-celebrations of Kulapati Munshi's Birth Centenary and Bhavan's Golden Jubilee are coming in from the various Centres of the Bhavan.

Shri P. Chidambaram, Union Minister of State for Home, who inaugurated the celebrations in Madras on January 13, said what the nation needed today was re-dedication to the fundamental values for which the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan stood, and not any revival of religious fundamentalism.

Bhavan's founding father K.M. Munshi was a renaissance man and it was



Shri P. Chidambaram, Union Minister of State for Home, lighting a lamp marking the beginning of the twin celebrations: (R to L): Shri M.P. Sivagnanam, Shri C. Subramaniam, Shri S. Narayanaswamy and Shri S. Ramakrishnan. At extreme left is Shri V.P. Dhananjayan.



Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi singing the Invocation song. (Seated, L To R): Shri P. Chidambaram, Shri M.P. Sivagnanam, Shri C. Subramaniam, Shri M.M. Ismail and Shri T. Sadasivam.

necessary to recapture the spirit of modern Indian renaissance, he said.

Dr. Munshi had played a leading part in the freedom struggle, in the framing of the Indian Constitution, and his greatest work was the founding of the Bhavan.

Instead of instilling robust nationalism in the minds of the young, Shri Chidambaram was sorry that there was a tendency among many to stress aspects of regionalism and separatism which had to be fought relentlessly.

While paying a handsome tribute to Dr. Munshi's broad vision, he said, "Our new education policy has drawn largely from him."

Shri M.P. Sivagnanam, Chairman of the High Power Committee for Tamil Development who presided over the meeting, pointed out that instead of laying any blame at the door of religion the real culprits should be identified as those who, without truly understanding and following religious precepts, used religion as a cover for creating tensions and communal clashes.

He lauded the role of Kulapati Munshi and the Bhavan in placing before the people high ideals which, when translated into action, would lead to peace and harmony and unity. One had to constantly guard against slipping away from high ideals, he counselled.

Shri C. Subramaniam, Chairman of the Bhavan's Madras Kendra and Vice-President of the Bhavan, outlined the programmes and projects to be taken up during the Munshi Centenary and the Bhavan's Golden Jubilee.

He said it was proposed to establish an Institute of Sarva Dharma Studies and Research to foster religious harmony and inter-religious understanding. Another project in view aimed at synthesising science and spirituality.

Shri M.M. Ismail who presided over the meeting said that a ten-day cultural programme of dance, drama and music would be held as part of the celebrations.

Significantly, the function began with an invocation song by Smt. M.S. Subbulakshmi who is an Honorary Member of the Bhavan.



Kum. Gayathri
Ramakrishnan —
Bharata Natyam



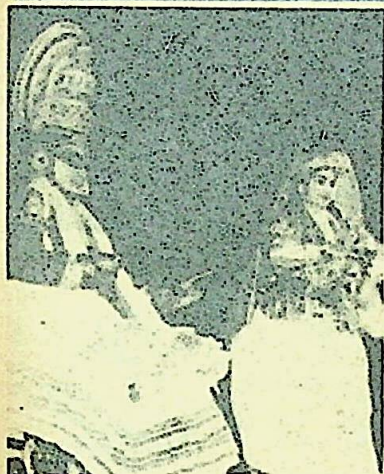
Smt. Chitra
Visweswaran —
Krishnanjali Solo



Kum. Shobha
Natarajan —
Bharata Natyam



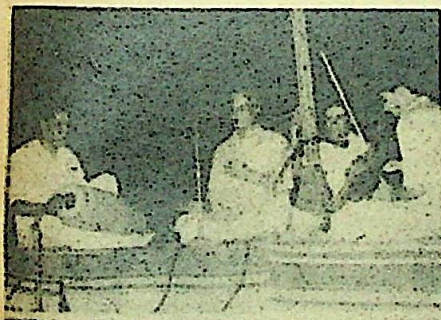
Dhananjayans — Bharata Natyam



Kathakali — Kalamandalam Troupe

Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary of the Central Bhavan, in a reminiscence-packed speech recalled his good fortune of coming into contact with Munshiji and the struggle and excitement of building up the Bhavan with the blessing of God and the good aided by the purity of the "Samkalpa."

Shri S. Narayanaswamy, in the course of his thanksgiving speech, exhorted the younger generation to take increasing interest in the Bhavan. He announced that a Camp for the youth would shortly be held in Kodaikanal.



T.V. Sankaranarayan & Party
— Vocal Music



V.V. Sankaranarayan and
V. V. Ravi — Violin Duet

'HEALTH AND NUTRITION'

EXHIBITION AT WADIA SCHOOL

A highly educative exhibition illustrating the link between good health and nutritious food was got up for three days from January 29, 1988, at the Bhavan's A.H. Wadia High School, Andheri, Bombay.

The 'Health and Nutrition' exhibition was organised by the students of the eighth standard under the guidance of the Principal, Smt. Kashmirabehn Pandit. It projected the value of food in terms of carbohydrates, proteins, fats and vitamins through charts, models and samples. The composition of a balanced diet, the food habits of people in the different States of the country, the energy and protein requirements at various ages, kitchen-gardening and varieties of medical plants were on display at the exhibition. The students gave a good account of themselves in explaining the exhibits under their charge.

The exhibition represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Rama Vaidya of the Bhavan's Swami Prakashananda Ayurvedic Research Centre (SPARC) in educating Standard VIII students in health and nutrition. Dr. Rama Vaidya, who handles the 'Mother and Child Health Project' of SPARC, undertook a systematic programme of instruction of the students over a period of about eight months. The programme aimed at educating the target group in health-care and enlightened living.

Dr. Rama Vaidya hopes to hold similar exhibitions in all Bhavan's schools in various States.

The exhibition was inaugurated on January 29, 1988 by Dr. (Mrs) M.A. Verghese, Director, Post-Graduate Studies & Research, Home Science, S.N.D.T. University.

The S.V.T. College of Home Science of the S.N.D.T. University was closely

associated with the organisation of the exhibition.



Kanchi Acharya Honours 'Chakyar' Rajan

Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Swami Jayendra Saraswati, has conferred on Shri K.K. Rajan of Bombay the title of 'Kerala Kala Prachara Mani.'

Shri Rajan, a Cost Accountant, is an acknowledged master of 'Chakyar Koothu', one of the traditional temple arts of Kerala.

In 'Chakyar Koothu', the exponent dons the prescribed costume and, accompanied by an assistant playing on a drum called 'Mizhavu', tells puranic tales with an abundance of wit and humour. The sallies are often directed against one or the other in the audience who does not take offence but rather joins in the fun.

Shri Rajan, though not born a Chakyar, with his histrionic skill and in-born sense of humour, supplemented by hard work, has won for himself all-India



recognition. He has been giving his performances in all parts of the country for the last 30 years.

Shri Rajan gave a special performance at Kanchipuram at the Agama Shilpa Sadas held there under the auspices of the Kanchi Kamakoti-Mutt on January 8, 9, and 10 this year.

In conferring the title of 'Kerala Kala Prachara Mani', His Holiness Shri Jayendra Saraswati has expressed his appreciation of Shri Rajan's efforts to keep alive an almost dying art of Kerala. He has said

that through this art people come to know the elements of our cultural tradition.

Shri Rajan has been the recipient of other titles such as 'Sakatha Prachara Mani' and 'Sarasya Ratnakaram.'

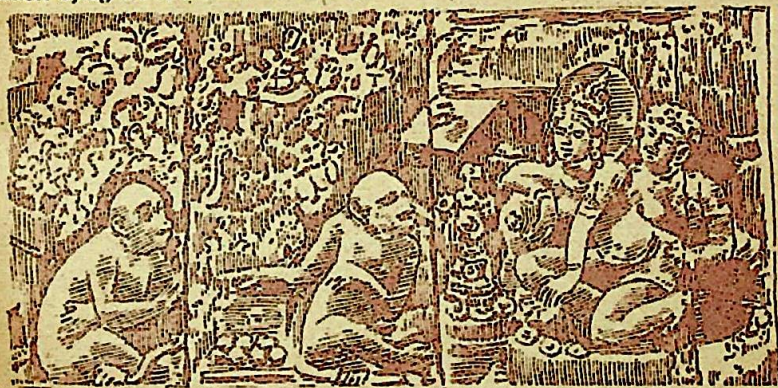
'AKILAN' PASSES AWAY

Shri P. Akilandam, well-known Tamil Novelist, who wrote under the penname 'Akilan', died in Madras in Sunday January 31, after a prolonged illness. He was 65.

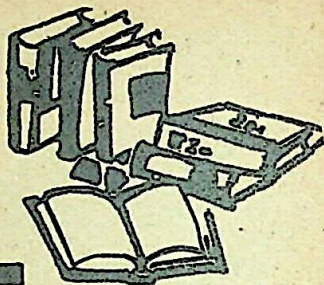
Recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award in 1955 and the prestigious Jnanapith Award in 1976. Akilan had to his credit 45 Tamil novels and short story collections. Some of his novels have been translated into other Indian languages and also into English, German, Chinese and Russian.

Akilan, who graduated from Maharaaja's College, Pudukottai, participated in the freedom movement and served in the P & T Department for 12 years and later devoted himself to writing. He had also worked as Chief Producer of the spoken-word programmes (Tamil) in All India Radio, Madras.

He is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters.



The World of Books



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — THE EDUCATOR: by V. Sukumaran Nair, Sterling Publishers Private Ltd. New Delhi-110 016. Page 93. price Rs. 60/-.

A RESEARCHER has made a laudable attempt to study the educational ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda and the book under review is the welcome result of that enquiry and analysis. The present-day India is now anxious to have a new system of education, more useful, more fruitful and with far reaching impact on society.

Swami Vivekananda has given a clarion call for national renaissance. In one of his inspiring lectures, he says: "Education is not the amount of information that is put into the brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas.... The present system is only to make a host of clerks, Post-masters and Telegraph operators and so on."

Swami Vivekananda's approach was universal and his stress was on the divinity latent in man. Hence he was mainly concerned with ethics, morality, and nation-building.

The author has keenly followed the inspired talks of Swami Vivekananda and tried to evaluate the educational ideas with a researchers' aptitude and interest. The study reveals his academic interest as well as his devotion to the great patriot-saint of India.

The present dissertation is a good addition to the literature on Vivekananda.

—Dr. V.S. Sharma

THE COSMIC GUIDANCE FOR MAN (Dedicated to World Peace) by S. Subramania Iyer, published by the author, III/49, L.I.C. Colony, III Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-11, June 1987. Pp. 288; Price 15/-

The book speaks primarily about the basic tenets and essentials of Sanatana Dharma, having perennial values and universal validity. These form part of the ancient Indian wisdom, and is still relevant in these days of sophisticated technology. In fact, they alone may be able to save the humanity, inclusive of India, from the present-day crisis.

The first chapter on Cosmic Rhythm consists of about 20 poems, which are full of humanism and rich in sublime mysticism. The observations and suggestions made in other chapters are surely pertinent in the present context. However, the material of chapters 2, 3 and 6 does not appear to be essentially different from that of chapter 5 on Cosmic Guidance for Man. We wonder whether the material as presented in the book would have the desired impact on English-knowing people, unless the same is thoroughly edited.

—Dr. A.S. Ghosh

HEALING THROUGH GEMS: by N.N. Saha. Published by Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi-110 016, Jalandhar-144 003; Bangalore-560 009. Price Rs. 60/-.

In recent years research in modern medicine has brought to light a whole range of severe side-effects caused by the drugs administered in allopathic treatment which give quick reliefs and fast cures. People are turning to other less harmful systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Homoeopathy and gem-therapy.

Gems have been long considered to possess miracle cures. It has been said that gems have brought back many from the brink of death. In this book, Shri Saha gives concrete examples of cure through gems after modern medicine was found ineffective. Shri Saha makes a convincing case for gem therapy.

The book is well illustrated. Detailed analysis of the birth charts of celebrities like Subhash Chandra Bose, Roosevelt, Stalin, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman are also given.

—Usha Raja

SHORT STORIES: by P.M. Nityanandan. Published by Writers Workshop, Calcutta. Prize Rs. 80/- hardback, Rs. 60/- for flexiback.

Fiction as a genre has, in recent years, fallen out of fashion; although there are still writers producing good short stories, media outlets for these have shrunk, not withstanding the burgeoning numbers of new magazines on the stands. Everyone wants to write (and read) 'investigative' reportage or newsworthy and 'topically hot' copy. In the face of these trends, many a talented writer has turned away from fiction.

Nityanandan's volume of short stories brought out by the Writers Workshop comes as a diverting offering to those who enjoy a good yarn. Though he is an engineer by profession, he has a gift for a turn of phrase particularly the 'old fashioned', descriptive kind that makes reading a story a pleasure not just because of the plot but also for the word content. At the same time, his is not a contrived, literary style but a simple and natural narrative that flows freely.

The fourteen stories in this collection appeared in various magazines and papers over a period of two decades, and are marked by a variety of themes, plots and denouements. *The Islander* is set in the Andamans, with evocative descriptions of lagoon and lush vegetation; *Mask of betrayal* has a Parisian locale, and *The Adventure* is woven around an encounter between two men on the Madras beach. In two of the stories, Nityanandan has manoeuvred a finale with the closing sentence, and though one is able to guess his intentions in one of these, the development of other, *The Star Men* (which reads like a conventional sci-fi story, to begin with) comes as a sudden and well-guarded surprise. *Pollish, Sir*, a straightforward rugging-at-your-heartstrings tale about a poor roadside boy, mirrors the kind of 'social realism' that went out a fashion in fiction a decade and a half ago. Not all the tales will appeal to every reader, but that does not detract from the merits of the best of this collection.

Like all Writers Workshop books, this one is handsomely bound in colourful handloom cloth, and the layout and lettering are pleasing.

—Sakuntala Narasimhan

Sanskrit

**SRI KRISHNA ASHTOTHARA SATHA
NAMA PUJA AND GITA JNANA
MALA, ASHTOTHARA SATASLOKI
GITA** with English translation — Compiled by P.V. Krishna Rao, S.O.G.T. Publications, Hyderabad-29.

This booklet contains (1) descriptions of various Hindu religious practices like purification, worship, and methods of worship, (2) One hundred and eight mantras formed on the basis of the seventh chapter of the Gita, (3) Ashtothara Sat-saloki Gita, (Gita Jnana mala) and (4) the English rendering of 108 verses of the Gita.

Of course, this book provides some basic information about the religious practices of Hindus, but the presentation as well as the translation leave much to be desired. Any new book on Hindu religion or scriptures should be comprehensive and unerringly dependable, otherwise it will only help to mislead even the so-called believers. The present compiler requires able guidance in the matter.

—Dr. V.S. Sharma

Telugu

Sri Rama Charita Manasamu (Tulasi Ramayana Prasangameeleu) — Aranya, Kishikandha, Sundara, Lanka and Uttara Kandas by Sri Ragam Rama Pachaiah, Published by Sri Rama Nama Khestram, Guntur-5, Price Rs. 8, Pages 278.

The epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, have a profound influence on the conduct, character and ethical values of Indian people. Sant Tulsidas's 'Rama Charita Manas' is one of the great works in Hindi. Its popularity is unsurpassed by any other book in the Hindi-speaking region because of the manifest devotion, simple illustration, musical language and, of course, the matter itself.

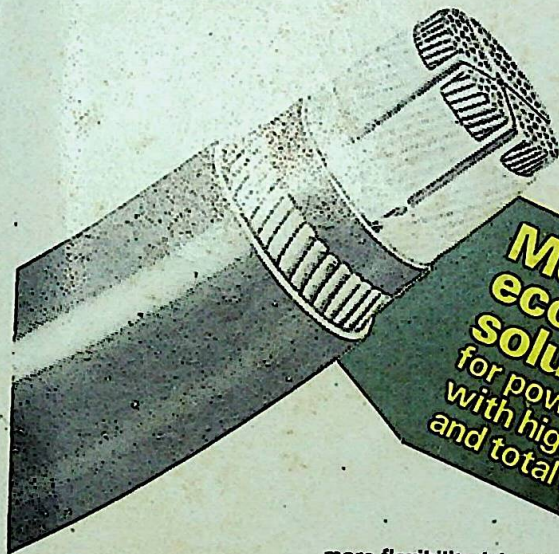
Sri Rama Charita Manasamu is a Telugu rendering by Sri Ragam Rama Pichaili of the Tulsidas's Rama Charita Manas as sung and expounded in Hindi by the Sant-Devotee Murari Babu Hariani of Gujarat. Sri Murari Babu is devoting his entire time travelling all over India to expound Rama Charita Manasa. The 222nd Ramayana Navaashnia (for nine days) was conducted in Guntur in August 1980. Sri Rama Pitchaiah's Telugu rendering has brought out the essence of Tulsi Ramayana without the usual impairment or loss in translation. His Telugu is neither too Sanskritised nor too populist. Being a devotee himself, he has been able to convey the true spirit and message of the Ramayana and the commentary of Murari Babu is beautiful, sweet and full of soft words and phrases. It is so nice that all its 278 pages had been read in one day. I hope that the Telugu publication may inspire readers to read the original Tulsidas. All High Schools would do well to have this in their libraries and encourage the students to read this and such books to build up their moral, cultural and Bharatiya character.

—T.H. Chowdary



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*Bless me, Oh the Consort of Hari, the
Delighter (who) sits on a lotus, holding a
lotus in hand, shining in white robes, with
sandal paste and garland, and making the
three worlds prosperous.*

— Adi Shankaracharya's Kanakadhara
Stotra

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